

Bashir affirms Halaib claim

KHARTOUM (R) — The Sudanese head of state has reaffirmed Sudan's claim to Halaib triangle, a border area which is also claimed by Egypt. Lieutenant-General Omar Hassan Al Bashir, chairman of the military council which rules Sudan, said Halaib was 100 per cent Sudanese and Sudan never relinquished any inch of territory. He was speaking at a rally in the eastern state of Suddut al-Najd and was quoted by the official news agency SUNA Wednesday. "Masses of Egyptian forces at Halaib will never frighten us or make us relinquish our land," Gen. Bashir added. Egypt and Sudan have been at odds over the remote stretch of desert for over a year. Last month Sudan complained to the United Nations that Egypt had sent 600 troops there. Sudan administered the area from 1899 until last year but Cairo says it was always under Egyptian sovereignty. Gen. Bashir also told the rally Sudan would not abandon its Islamisation programme whatever pressures it comes under. He said the "new world order" and what he called fabricated allegations of human rights violations in Sudan were designed to stop an Islamic revival. Gen. Bashir's government imposed Islamic law on Jan. 1, 1991. Three months later it passed a new legal code derived almost entirely from Sharia law.

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Izetbegovic, Boban order ceasefire

GENEVA (AP) — Leaders of Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats ordered an immediate ceasefire between their forces Wednesday. Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic and Croat leader Mate Boban issued a joint statement after a day of talks in Geneva even as the Muslim-led government of Bosnia-Herzegovina said Serb attacks in eastern Bosnia threaten to undermine overall Geneva peace talks. International mediators diverted themselves from their peace plan Wednesday to try to ease tensions between Muslims and Croats in the central part of the country, a spokesman said (see earlier story on page 6).

Mrs. Hoxha gets 9 years in jail

TRIANA, Albania (AP) — A court on Wednesday sentenced the 72-year-old widow of former dictator Enver Hoxha to nine years in jail for corruption during the closing years of communist rule. Prosecutor Teodor Mosko had demanded a 14-year sentence for Nexhmije Hoxha, the first member of Albania's former communist elite to face trial. But the widow told the court Tuesday that such a jail term would be "absurd and equal to a death sentence." The maximum allowable sentence was 25 years or death. The minimum was seven years. Mrs. Hoxha was charged with misusing more than 750,000 leks, the equivalent of \$75,000, in state funds between her husband's death in 1985 and the collapse of his regime in 1990. Kimo Buxhel, 39, who headed the communist government agency that provided special funds and services to high-ranking communists and their families, was sentenced to four years in prison on the same charge.

Algerian forces detain 84

ALGIERS (R) — Algerian security forces arrested 84 suspected Muslim fundamentalists Monday and Tuesday and seized guns, bombs and ammunition, gendarmes headquarters said Wednesday. The suspects were seized "by security forces operating in the framework of the anti-terrorist struggle," the paramilitary gendarmerie, quoted by the official news agency APS, said. They were arrested in Bordj Bou Arreridj, 170 kilometres south-east of Algiers. The area is just outside the capital that is under indefinite night curfew. Among weapons seized were 15 automatic pistols and six hunting rifles. More than 320 people have been detained this month. At least 1,300 were arrested in the last three months of 1992.

Babel jeers at Turkish premier

BAGHDAD (R) — An Iraqi newspaper jeered at Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel on Wednesday and branded him "a dog." Babel said in a front-page headline, topping a story on Mr. Demirel's visit to Saudi Arabia "the Turkish dog arrives in Riyadh." Mr. Demirel is on a tour of Arab Gulf countries seeking financial assistance and discussing the Iraq situation. Iraq's official press stepped up attacks on Mr. Demirel following two raids by U.S. warplanes based in southern Turkey on radar and missile sites in the northern "no-fly" zone set up by the Western allies.

Israel will not demand foreigners pass AIDS tests

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel has reversed a ruling that would have required foreigners in the country for more than three months to pass an AIDS test or face expulsion, an interior ministry spokesman said Wednesday. The ruling, which was to have gone into effect this month, sparked a row in Israel when it was announced in November. Under the rule, foreigners who wanted to stay more than three months and who tested positive for the HIV virus which causes AIDS would be forced to return home. The spokeswoman said the interior, health and immigration ministers had agreed not to require AIDS testing of tourists who want to stay longer than three months.

Israeli ruling on evictees due today

Rabin defends decision; U.S. signals rejection of U.N. move towards sanctions against Israel

Combined agency despatches

ON THE EVE of a critical high court ruling, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin claimed Wednesday his expulsion of more than 400 Palestinians was having "positive results" that would vindicate the action. The seven-judge panel was to issue a ruling at about 9 a.m. Thursday on the legality of the Dec. 17 expulsion. If the court rules against the expulsions, the government would have no apparent choice but to repatriate the Palestinians from their tent camp in Lebanon, effectively ending the crisis and heading off possible U.N. penalties. Israeli newspapers have reported that some cabinet ministers, dismayed at the way the affair has boomeranged against Israel in world opinion, are hoping the court will rule the expulsions "illegal and give Israel a face-saving way out of the tangle."

Mr. Rabin, however, insisted he did the right thing. "I am convinced that the government's decision to temporarily remove the inciters, the leaders, the organisers of Hamas actions, was a correct decision," he told reporters. Hamas and Islamic Jihad are the fundamentalist movements blamed for a wave of deadly attacks on Israeli troops that ostensibly provoked the expulsions. "I already see it has had positive results on the ground," said Mr. Rabin. "We took a step that is being criticised today ... but in the medium and long term it was a correct decision."

He would not spell out the "positive results." He could have been referring to an apparent drop in fundamentalist attacks, or to Israel's conviction that by cracking down on the militants who oppose the peace process, it is strengthening Palestinian moderates who want to negotiate a settlement. However, the Palestinians have said they will boycott the U.S.-sponsored talks until the evictees are allowed home. The expulsion also has given publicity to Hamas since the evictees are regularly interviewed in their camp, where they are stranded by Lebanon's refusal to accept them permanently in the country. The high court is to rule on appeals from Israeli civil rights advocates and families of evictees who argue that the hurried expulsion sidestepped legal procedure. The government has responded that it has upheld the law by giving the evictees the right to appeal from Lebanon and that security considerations necessitated the immediate expulsion. The defence ministry report Wednesday that mobile telephones may be distributed to the evictees so that they can talk to their lawyers. But a spokesman for the evictees, Dr. Abdul Aziz Rantisi, has ruled out appeals, insisting that the men be returned as demanded by a unanimous U.N. Security Council resolution on Dec. 18. U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali, in a report released Tuesday, said Israel's defiance of the resolution "challenges the authority of the Security Council."

He recommended the council do whatever necessary to enforce its decision. This raised the spectre of sanctions, although Israeli officials appear confident the United States will block such a step. In an effort to assuage world opinion, Israel has repatriated 14 men expelled in error, hospitalised five more and allowed the Red Cross to reach the tent camp through Israeli lines. But Dr. Ghali's report indicated that "humanitarian" gestures were no substitute for full compliance with the resolution. Mr. Rabin complained in public that the report was one-sided because it did not mention Palestinians acts of violence. He

refused to comply with Security Council Resolution 799, which calls for the immediate and unconditional return of the evictees to their homes in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. "The United States is attempting to get Israel off the hook and also is trying to get itself off the hook. America is embarrassed because it supports imposing sanctions on Iraq and avoids cornering Israel," Dr. Rantisi said. He said Israeli troops were killing Palestinian children in the occupied territories and destroying the homes of Palestinians accused of supporting the fundamentalist Muslim Hamas and Islamic Jihad movements. "In solidarity with our people in the occupied territories and to protest against the Zionist refusal to comply with Security Council Resolution 799, which calls for the immediate and unconditional return of the evictees to their homes in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip," their spokesman said Wednesday. Gaza physician Abdul Aziz Rantisi also accused the United States of "attempting to get Israel off the hook" by proposing a settlement for the evictees' ordeal through diplomatic efforts, outside the framework of the U.N. Security Council.

Dr. Rantisi, talking to reporters at the evictees' camp, said Washington was "trying to rescue Israel at a time U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali is trying to rescue the credibility of the U.N. Security Council." Dr. Ghali had threatened to impose sanctions on Israel for its refusal to comply with Security Council Resolution 799, which calls for the immediate and unconditional return of the evictees to their homes in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. "The United States is attempting to get Israel off the hook and also is trying to get itself off the hook. America is embarrassed because it supports imposing sanctions on Iraq and avoids cornering Israel," Dr. Rantisi said. He said Israeli troops were killing Palestinian children in the occupied territories and destroying the homes of Palestinians accused of supporting the fundamentalist Muslim Hamas and Islamic Jihad movements. "In solidarity with our people in the occupied territories and to protest against the Zionist refusal to comply with Security Council Resolution 799, which calls for the immediate and unconditional return of the evictees to their homes in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip," their spokesman said Wednesday. Gaza physician Abdul Aziz Rantisi also accused the United States of "attempting to get Israel off the hook" by proposing a settlement for the evictees' ordeal through diplomatic efforts, outside the framework of the U.N. Security Council.

White House on January 20. Iraq has had a series of standoffs with U.N. teams dismantling its weapons of mass destruction. An Iraqi ban on U.N. flights delayed the return of U.N. staff after their Christmas and New Year break by two weeks. But the head of the U.N. aerial inspection team told reporters he had had no problems since returning last week. Mr. Englund, commenting on the destruction of chemical weapons at Muthana 130 kilometres north-west of Baghdad, said members of the team felt good about the way the operation was going. Maurizio Zifferero, head of the nuclear team, inspected sites in and around Baghdad. He and Nikita Smidovitch, head of a ballistics team, both say they are talking to their Iraqi counterparts about long-term monitoring. "It's part of our exchange of views," Mr. Zifferero said Wednesday. State radio reported that President Saddam had talks Wednesday with Air Marshal Muzahim Saib Al Hassan and other senior military officials. Newspapers and television have given prominence to these meetings, which have been attended by Iraqi pilots and air defence commanders. Iraq declared a goodwill ceasefire for Bill Clinton's inauguration as U.S. president and called for dialogue on "no-fly" zones closing off its northern and southern skies and a U.N. embargo in force since its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait. The declaration followed four days of U.S.-led air and missile strikes which killed at least 46 people in the final days of the Bush administration. Iraq has denounced the "no-fly" zones as illegal, saying they have no U.N. backing. U.S. planes fired missiles or dropped bombs there in the first few days of the Clinton presidency, saying Iraqi air defences locked radar onto them or opened fire. Iraq said the attacks were unprovoked. There have been no such incidents since the U.N. teams arrived. Iraq's ruling Baath Party newspaper, Al Thawra, meanwhile, welcomed the arrival of a group of Russian nationalists, including some in paramilitary dress, as a sign of hope that ties with Moscow could be rebuilt. Ties between Iraq and Moscow

Jerusalem (R) — Israeli troops shot dead a Palestinian in the occupied Gaza Strip Wednesday, military sources said. The man, Omar Hamis Al Ghola, 29, was the 1,000th Palestinian killed by Israelis since the start of the Palestinian revolt in December 1987 according to an unofficial Reuters count. The sources said troops on searches in Gaza City gave chase when three Palestinians fled on sighting soldiers. Troops shot and fatally wounded Ghola when he took out a pistol, the sources said, and a hand grenade was found on his body. Palestinians said Ghola commanded a military unit of the Islamic Jihad in Gaza. Military sources said he was wanted by Israeli security forces. They did not say why.

at the Paris meeting will bring together the group of seven industrialised countries, several European nations, Japan, the IMF and the World Bank as well as various Arab funds and international agencies. Despite conflicting arguments, diplomats as well as local analysts believe Jordan will not face a real problem in Paris to raise the sought-for \$350 million. Mr. Jarda's talks with the London Club follow the submission of a new Jordanian proposal for settling/scheduling the Kingdom's commercial debts. After several rounds of talks and exchange of proposals, Jordan is holding out for better-than-offered terms from the London Club. Few details are available on the new proposal Jordan has forwarded to the commercial creditors, but it is known to involve debt conversion into investments and holdings in Jordanian dinars, partial write-off interest and partial debt buy-back at discounted terms.



CAUGHT IN FIRE: A Bosnian couple rush their boy who was injured in heavy Serbian artillery and injured son across the street in central Sarajevo. The mortar fire on the city (see page 8)

Government defers deadline for enforcement of firearms rules

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government Wednesday postponed the implementation of new regulations on the possession of firearms until it discusses the issue with the Administrative Committee of the Lower House of Parliament. In arguing their case, deputies opposed to the regulation said that the government should seriously consider their demands because they echo the wishes of the people. Deputy Abdul Aziz Jaber claimed that the government had asked the citizens to arm themselves during the Gulf crisis and should not disarm them now. The deputies' claim could not be substantiated and there were no reports that the government had made such a request. Reminding deputies of the illegality of the possession of arms, Sharif Zeid expressed surprise

that deputies raised the matter five days before the end of the deadline by which citizens are required to turn in their illegal weapons. "To ensure that nothing can mar the security of the country," the government on Nov. 30 set new regulations for the possession of firearms in the country. While it banned citizens from keeping automatic weapons, the government said it would license revolvers and hunting rifles. The government instructed citizens to hand in their unlicensed automatic weapons to police stations while it ordered others who have legal permission to own them to await further instructions. Licences for "carrying" revolvers were repealed by the new regulations. Citizens who do not comply with the new regulation by the Jan. 31 deadline will be prosecuted.

AMMAN — Nineteen deputies Wednesday proposed that voting in parliamentary elections become mandatory for all eligible citizens as the House asked the government to amend the electoral law of 1986 to give 18-year-old Jordanians the right to vote. In a written request submitted to Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat, the deputies also proposed that the House ask the government to devise punitive measures against eligible voters who do not exercise their right to vote. Labour Minister and Deputy Abdul Karim Al Kabari, who championed the proposal, said voting was obligatory in many countries and his proposal did not conflict with constitutional guarantees to protect personal freedoms of citizens. Referring to voting as a "national duty," Mr. Kabari said that in making the request, he was echoing His Majesty King Hussein's call on Jordanians to exercise their right to vote. During a meeting with Jordanian journalists Tuesday, King Hussein said that parliamentary elections, scheduled for November this year, will not be delayed. He called on all citizens to exercise their right. The deputies made their request in accordance with the Constitution, which says that 10 deputies or more can put forward to the House proposals for new laws. If the request is supported by a majority of deputies, the government will be asked to draft the proposed legislation. Endorsing the recommendation of its Judiciary Committee, the

Jordan and donors meet in Paris today

By P. V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan and a group of 24 donor countries open talks in Paris Thursday on the Kingdom's quest to secure international assistance to plug a projected gap of about \$350 million in its balance of payments in fiscal year 1993. The Jordanian team, headed by Finance Minister Basel Jarad, and including Central Bank Governor Michel Marto and several senior officials, left for Paris Wednesday. Following the three-day World Bank-organised meeting in the French capital, the delegation would proceed to London for a fresh round of negotiations with Jordan's commercial creditors grouped in the London Club on rescheduling the Kingdom's debts to banks and financial institutions. Diplomats and officials here meanwhile discounted a report from Paris that Jordan was seeking up to \$750 million from the donor countries during the meetings which begin Thursday. "It is an unrealistic figure," said a western diplomat closely familiar with Jordan's economy and its efforts at economic restructuring in line with a programme agreed to with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). "Jordan is aiming for up to \$400 million in assistance, and there is no telling whether this would be met by the donor countries in direct cash aid," said the diplomat, noting that the fiscal budget of the Kingdom projected \$350 million in actual shortfall in the balance of payments after expected foreign grants. "Some of the pledges may come in the form of financing for essential development projects or even export credits which will free foreign exchange for the Kingdom to use for adjusting the balance of payment," the diplomat added. "The World Bank and the IMF approve of such an approach."

A report from Paris said that Jordan was seeking \$1.5 billion in aid from donors. The report quoted sources as saying that Jordan hopes that half of it would be pledged in Paris while the other half would come in the form of rescheduled debt repayments to the Paris Club of creditor governments due after mid-1993. Under an agreement reached last year, Jordan rescheduled debts owed to Paris Club members until mid-1993 for 15 to 20 years. The Kingdom's total foreign debts are around \$6.8 billion; about \$4 billion is owed to the Paris Club, around \$1.1 billion to the London Club and the rest to former East bloc countries and Arab and international funds. At the Paris meeting, diplomats say, the success that Jordan achieved in salvaging its economy in the past four years in line with IMF guidelines and conditions, and the growth it registered, could be used against the Kingdom's quest for aid. "For all technical purposes, Jordan's economy is doing well as could be judged from the economic growth figures," noted another European diplomat. "Perhaps the strongest argument Jordan has to counter an approach that it

does not really help since its economy did well in 1991 and 1992 is that the growth represented expatriate savings brought in after the Gulf crisis and was a one-time shot in the arm." The Paris meeting will bring together the group of seven industrialised countries, several European nations, Japan, the IMF and the World Bank as well as various Arab funds and international agencies. Despite conflicting arguments, diplomats as well as local analysts believe Jordan will not face a real problem in Paris to raise the sought-for \$350 million. Mr. Jarda's talks with the London Club follow the submission of a new Jordanian proposal for settling/scheduling the Kingdom's commercial debts. After several rounds of talks and exchange of proposals, Jordan is holding out for better-than-offered terms from the London Club. Few details are available on the new proposal Jordan has forwarded to the commercial creditors, but it is known to involve debt conversion into investments and holdings in Jordanian dinars, partial write-off interest and partial debt buy-back at discounted terms.

Russia may veto further American attacks on Iraq

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Vice-President Alexander Rutskoi said Wednesday Russia was ready to use its veto power in the U.N. Security Council to halt "illegitimate" American attacks on Iraq, a news agency reported. Mr. Rutskoi's criticism was among the harshest yet by a Russian leader and was at odds with the line taken by President Boris Yeltsin. The vice-president often has differed with Mr. Yeltsin, and his comments reflected hard-line pressure on the president to oppose the U.S. actions. The United Nations must "not allow the U.S. to act in this way on its own will," Mr. Rutskoi told the Interfax news agency. Mr. Rutskoi said Russia was prepared to use its "possibilities" as a veto-wielding member of the Security Council to prevent further raids. "I am against the tactics of force against Iraq being employed by the United States," the vice-president told Interfax. Several Russian officials and

lawmakers stepped up their criticism of the U.S. raids following an attack on Baghdad this month. The Foreign Ministry later demanded a U.N. review of the U.S. action. Mr. Rutskoi criticised the "disproportionate and sometimes illegitimate" deployment of the U.S. military. He accused the United States of claiming U.N. permission for the raids while acting alone unilaterally. "The United States, which is currently recognising Russia as a world power, should at least consult her about such actions," Mr. Rutskoi told Interfax. "This does not mean two hours before the commencement of some military action, but within the procedure set down by the U.N. Security Council or within the framework of bilateral consultations," the vice-president said. The arrival of paramilitary Russian volunteers in Baghdad

Algerian newspaper lists 'Islamist camps in Sudan'

ALGIERS (R) — An Algerian newspaper Wednesday named 10 camps in Sudan where it said Muslim fundamentalists from Algeria, Egypt, Tunis, Somalia, Mali and Morocco were being "trained to kill." An Arab country's intelligence services provided the data, Le Journal said, without naming it. Sudan has denied charges that it trains fundamentalists to take part in destabilising Arab countries with the aim of turning them into Islamic states. Cairo has accused Khartoum of acting as surrogate for Iran in an effort to spread fundamentalism, while Algiers has reduced its links with Tehran to a symbolic level. Both Egypt and Algeria have been shaken by attacks blamed on fundamentalists. Tunisian President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali has also accused Khartoum of training and supporting activists. Le Journal said the camps, some of which were used to train Sudan's people's defence militia,

Deputies call for obligatory suffrage

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Nineteen deputies Wednesday proposed that voting in parliamentary elections become mandatory for all eligible citizens as the House asked the government to amend the electoral law of 1986 to give 18-year-old Jordanians the right to vote. In a written request submitted to Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat, the deputies also proposed that the House ask the government to devise punitive measures against eligible voters who do not exercise their right to vote. Labour Minister and Deputy Abdul Karim Al Kabari, who championed the proposal, said voting was obligatory in many countries and his proposal did not conflict with constitutional guarantees to protect personal freedoms of citizens. Referring to voting as a "national duty," Mr. Kabari said that in making the request, he was echoing His Majesty King Hussein's call on Jordanians to exercise their right to vote. During a meeting with Jordanian journalists Tuesday, King Hussein said that parliamentary elections, scheduled for November this year, will not be delayed. He called on all citizens to exercise their right. The deputies made their request in accordance with the Constitution, which says that 10 deputies or more can put forward to the House proposals for new laws. If the request is supported by a majority of deputies, the government will be asked to draft the proposed legislation. Endorsing the recommendation of its Judiciary Committee, the

Political honeymoon is over for Lebanon's government

BEIRUT (R) — Mounting criticism and rows have ended a three-month political honeymoon for Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri in his drive to resurrect Lebanon from 15 years of civil war.

A much-needed massive infusion of Arab aid to rebuild the country has failed to arrive. The unrest is buffeting the Hariri administration despite strong international and domestic support for its refusal to accept 415 Palestinians expelled by Israel nearly six weeks ago.

But its success on this single issue has failed to silence many Lebanese who hailed the appointment in October of the 48-year-old billionaire to his first political post as their best hope.

Diplomats warned at the time that popular hopes Mr. Hariri would swiftly work miracles were unrealistic and bound to be dashed.

Three months later, many Lebanese are disappointed and their hopes for a quick recovery are in tatters.

"When Hariri was appointed premier, we thought he would work wonders," said Nabil

Fakhani, a Beirut supermarket manager.

"But despite having his own way for three months now, we still suffer from heavy rationing of electricity and drinking water and the telephones still barely work. What went wrong?"

Businessman Mohammad Ismail said many people felt Mr. Hariri should be given more time but there were signs he was running into problems in his plans to end the social and economic rot.

"More time is needed but the recent rows between Hariri and other officials and the slowness in the attempts to reform the government administration are not encouraging," Mr. Ismail said.

Mr. Hariri had a row last week with President Elias Hrawi over naming several senior civil servants. It ended with the prime minister getting his way but it caused further appointments to be delayed.

Appointing new civil servants is seen by Mr. Hariri as the key to reforming the corrupt and inefficient administration, which is vital to reviving the economy and encouraging investment and aid.

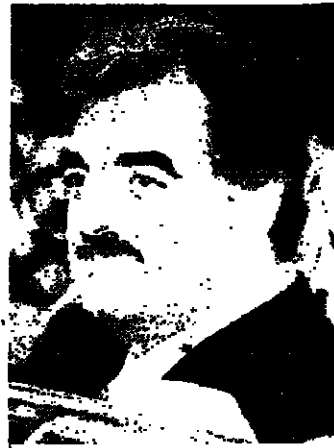
"Hariri's confrontation with Hrawi indicates the honeymoon is over," said a minister's aide, who declined to be named. "The businessman (Hariri) now has to play politics and avoid turning the politicians against him."

The clearest sign of economic recovery after Mr. Hariri came to power was in the foreign exchange market. The Lebanese pound rose from around 2,400 to the dollar in September to 1,825 last week.

But the euphoria has subsided. Bankers say the pound is coming under increasing pressure, requiring intervention by the central bank which has sold about \$100 million in recent weeks.

"The reports of political rifts and the failure to improve services have pushed people into caution," said banker Sami Na'amani. "Caution means a very slow shift back to the dollar."

Plans to rebuild Beirut, once the financial capital of the Middle East and a tourist hub, have also caused Mr. Hariri problems. A parliamentary committee Tuesday scrapped a plan to re-



Rafik Hariri

build Beirut's southern suburb largely with private investment after fierce criticism by the pro-Iranian Hizbullah group. Plans to rebuild the war-ravaged downtown of Beirut are still on track with committees surveying the area to set a price for the land before a real estate company is established to rebuild.

But the operation has come under fire from some landowners and parliamentarians as being too closely linked to Mr. Hariri.

"Hariri gave himself until spring to start things going," the ministerial aide said. "We are willing to give him until then. But if there are no breakthroughs, he'll be in trouble."

Luxury goods go under the counter in Iraq

By Jane Arraf Reuters

BAGHDAD — The shop owner reached under the counter and pulled out a luxury import he is forbidden to sell. "I could be fined for selling this," he said, holding a package of strawberry chewing gum whose price is now equivalent to what some Iraqis earn in a day.

Consumer goods from candy to coffee have gone under the counter and soared in price a month after the Iraqi government banned a long list of luxury imports to conserve foreign currency.

Officials say the ban, which listed more than 100 imported items forbidden for sale from Dec. 10, is working.

But there are signs the government is backing off. An increasing number of items appear to be dropping off the original blacklist. Official newspapers reported Tuesday the cabinet had agreed to cancel the ban on computers, which it said were as important as food.

And despite official denials of a black market, some banned goods are still available, but at sharply higher prices. However, corner stores which overflowed with goods from all over the world before U.N. sanctions were imposed after Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait now appear almost empty.

Shelves hold locally made products and a few imports such as canned meat which are tolerated by roving government inspectors despite a ban on tinmed goods.

Businessmen said the ban was also aimed at equalising the obvious disparity between rich and poor in post-war Iraq. "This place used to have all kinds of cakes and pastries," complained an Iraqi professional in a popular coffee shop which now serves little but coffee.

But, said one merchant: "It is difficult to see someone eating cake when you cannot afford bread."

Instant coffee, formerly a middle class staple, is now a prized commodity rarely available at any price.



While staple food and essential items are freely available in the Iraqi market at high prices, items

categorized as 'luxury' have gone under the counter following the enactment of a new law (AFP photo)

A package of chewing gum which sold for one dinar, worth about three cents at the widely-used black market rate, now costs seven times that much — about a day's pay for some workers.

Diplomats said the ban could have political advantages for the government. It could, they said, present the appear-

ance of quick economic recovery by bringing out stored goods any time it pleased.

The ban and currency crunch have left a huge duty-free shop on the outskirts of Baghdad stocked with an odd assortment of left-overs.

Display cases once jammed with cosmetics and electrical appliances now hold brass

drawer handles, hundreds of American-made electric egg boilers and packages of men's handkerchiefs all marked with the letter N.

Imported cigarettes, banned under the new rules, are gone but shelves still groan with new supplies of scotch whisky which along with other hard liquor is exempt from the ban.

Islamic group claims Cairo killings

CAIRO (R) — Egypt's most active Muslim militant group has claimed responsibility for the killing of two policemen in Cairo four days ago.

The two transport police conscripts were found shot to death outside a railway workshop Saturday night.

In a statement faxed to Reuters, the Islamic Group or (Gama'a Al Islamiya) said one of its units — the "just punishment" — carried out four attacks in Cairo last week.

"The two policemen were killed on the spot to avenge our martyrs killed from torture," the type-written statement said in Arabic.

It said the three other attacks targeted three police cars in the areas of the Pyramids, Boulaq, and Imbaba in Cairo. It said the vehicles were destroyed but gave no further details.

"These attacks assert the failure of the regime's criminal schemes in suppressing the Gama'a Al Islamiya," the group said in apparent reference to Interior Minister Abdul Halim Musa who said Monday that extremists were brought under control.

The Islamic Group, seeking to turn Egypt into an Islamic state, said the attacks affirmed its pre-

vious pledges to move the confrontation with police troops from Upper Egypt to Cairo.

Egypt, rocked by Islamic fundamentalist violence directed at its vital tourist industry, has mounted large-scale security operations which have led to the arrest of hundreds of people in the past two months.

"As of today, we shall not keep any killer, executioner or jailer live in peace," the statement added.

Crackdown on teachers

Egypt is sacking or cutting the pay of Muslim fundamentalist teachers who segregate classes by religion or force girls to wear veils, the education minister said Tuesday.

"Our schools will not be dens for fundamentalism," Education Minister Hussein Kamel Bahaeddin told Reuters in an interview.

Mr. Kamel said activists forcing girls to wear veils and trying to segregate Muslims and Christians by putting them in different classes had been "severely punished" by losing their posts or pay cuts.

He said nearly 60 teachers had been punished in the past year, some of them found guilty of beating girls who had refused to

wear the veil.

"It is a clear cut policy...our inspectors are going to all schools with the task of stopping this phenomenon throughout Egypt's 25,000 schools," he said.

Mr. Kamel said the government decided to make education a top priority after Muslim militants turned schools into their launching pad towards establishing an Islamic state.

"We were busy with the economic reforms," Mr. Kamel said. "Education was not a priority. But after we finished with reforms, we said: 'It is about time to give a special care to education and to deal with it as a national security issue rather than a service.'"

He said militants had made government schools and universities key targets in their drive to recruit students and guarantee a future generation of Islamists.

The government has increased the education budget threefold over the past year to improve conditions and increase the wages of Egypt's 750,000 teachers who have been underpaid for years, he said.

The average salaries of primary school teachers, which had been 70 to 80 pounds (\$20 to \$25) a month, were doubled last year.

Yael Dayan to meet Arafat in Tunis

TUNIS (R) — Israeli Member of Parliament Yael Dayan is expected in Tunis Thursday for a meeting with Yasser Arafat, officials said Wednesday. Ms. Dayan, a member of the Labour Party and the daughter of the late Moshe Dayan, will be the first Israeli parliamentarian to take advantage of the Knesset decision earlier this month to repeal a law banning contacts with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). Knesset members had met the PLO even before the repeal, taking advantage of their parliamentary immunity. Ms. Dayan, whose father was minister of defence, met Mr. Arafat political adviser Nabil Shaath in the Hague in August. Two days after the Knesset repealed the law, veteran Israeli peace campaigner Abie Nathan met Mr. Arafat in Tunis and said a large meeting between Israelis and PLO leaders was expected in Cairo within weeks. But PLO officials in Cairo said Wednesday that no date had been set for such a meeting.

Algeria, Morocco exchange envoys

RABAT (R) — Morocco and neighbouring Algeria exchanged new ambassadors Tuesday after a week-long slanging match between newspapers in the two countries. King Hassan received credentials from the new Algerian ambassador, Mohammad Ghoualmi, and appointed a new Moroccan ambassador to Algeria, Abdul Karim Semmar, formerly envoy to the United Arab Emirates. Newspapers in the two countries exchanged broadsides last week after the king told an interviewer he would have preferred Algeria's outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) to have taken office after it won the first phase of a general election cancelled a year ago. Algerian papers said the king had given tacit encouragement to religious extremists. The Moroccan press reacted by accusing the Algerian media of reviving systematic hostility towards Morocco.

Morocco, Iran normalise ties

RABAT (R) — King Hassan received a new Iranian ambassador at the royal palace Tuesday to mark the normalisation of relations between Morocco and Iran after a 14-year rift. Ambassador Jaafar Chemisane, along with several other foreign envoys, presented credentials to the monarch. Relations were broken off with Tehran in 1979 after the Shah of Iran spent several weeks in Morocco when he fled the Islamic revolution led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Relations deteriorated further when Iran recognised the self-styled Saharan Arab Democratic Republic proclaimed by Polisario guerrillas fighting for independence of Western Sahara claimed by Morocco.

Iran police hold 140 in anti-vice sweeps

TEHRAN (R) — Police arrested more than 140 people, including five doctors, in anti-vice crackdowns in Iran's holy cities of Qom and Mashhad, newspapers said. The doctors and two civil servants were arrested in Mashhad for "holding corrupt parties, gambling and using drugs and alcoholic drinks," Salam newspaper said. It said the group was led by an anaesthetist who had confessed to promiscuous relations with several women. A doctor contacted in the northeastern city by telephone told Reuters the arrests were made three weeks ago after police seized a video film taken at a party from one of the doctors. Abrar newspaper said police rounded up 35 men and three women caught drinking or using drugs in a series of raids on several "pleasure dens" in Mashhad. The sweep was launched after a teenage girl led police to one of the houses, where she said she was kept against her will for eight days, it said. In Qom, police asked for an end to evening power cuts to help its fight against young men bothering girls going home from school in the dark, Abrar said.

NEC says computer sale to Iraq was valid

TOKYO (R) — Japan's NEC Corporation said Wednesday it sold Iraq a computer that may have been used in its secret nuclear arms programme but that this did not violate international rules at the time. "At the time they were not restricting sales of this kind of computer to Iraq," a spokesman said. In 1985 NEC supplied Iraq with a 750-series mainframe computer and standard software that was being marketed in Japan at the time. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) suspects it could have been used later for nuclear weapons research.

Iranian charged with smuggling countrymen

UPPSALA, Sweden (R) — An Iranian man who claims to have smuggled thousands of his compatriots into Scandinavia for humanitarian reasons went on trial Tuesday charged with breaking Swedish immigration laws. Amir Heidari, 39, was charged in Uppsala district court with smuggling 600 Iranians since April 1990, when he was released from prison in Sweden following a conviction for similar offences. District prosecutor Jan Edfors said a bank account opened by Mr. Heidari in Uppsala showed that he had earned six million crowns (\$850,000) from the alleged human smuggling. But defence lawyer Mats Arde said his client had acted out of humanitarian motives, having founded an organisation named Sol in the early 1980s in order to help Iranians flee from their country to Europe and Scandinavia.

Israeli court upholds gay right

TEL AVIV (AP) — A labour court recognised Tuesday a homosexual air attendant's rights to demand a free ticket for his permanent partner, Israel Television and the news agency Itim said. The attendant was insisting on fair treatment according to an El Al airline policy granting free or discounted tickets to the partners of employees who for some reason could not marry but who live together. Itim said. El Al said in court that a same-sex couple did not fall into that category, Itim added. But, the court judge said that if the air attendant could prove his partner lived with him permanently, he would be eligible for the same rights granted a heterosexual couple, Israel Television said. Itim said the court would hear the air attendant's evidence of his relationship's stability in a hearing set for March. Israel Television said Tuesday's hearing recognised for the first time in Israel the rights of homosexuals to live as a couple and to receive rights granted to heterosexual couples. The El Al spokesman could not be immediately reached for comment on the report.

Turkish Kurds launch hunger strike

BRUSSELS (R) — Fifteen Kurdish politicians have joined 700 Kurds on a hunger strike in Brussels to put pressure on Western governments to prevent what they say are Turkish plans for genocide in Kurdistan. The politicians, elected in Europe to a Kurdish parliament in exile, urged the European Parliament at a news conference Tuesday to send a delegation to Kurdistan to investigate human rights abuses. "We want to make known to the world the tragedy of our people's situation and to make Western public opinion aware of the approaching genocide," they said in a statement. Since Sunday, 700 Kurds have been camping in a former meat market in central Brussels. They have consumed only sugar-water and tea and spend most of the day sitting on foam mattresses.

Locust swarms invade Yemen from Africa

SANAA (AP) — Two swarms of desert locusts from East Africa have invaded Yemen this month, and officials in the Ministry of Agriculture say they fear infestations could increase. The first swarm settled on about four hectares of land in 'Ain Valley, north of the Red Sea city of Al Zabara, where the insects have been breeding and laying eggs. The other was sighted by ministry experts entering the Khudhray Valley, north of Thumad in South Yemen. Mohammad Al Ghesi, general manager of the ministry's plant protection department, said more than 3,000 hectares were threatened. Each swarm consists of an estimated half billion locusts, according to experts here. They eat around 200 tonnes of greenery a day, they said. After a 20-year reprieve, Yemen and neighbouring countries on the Arabian Peninsula were invaded by locust swarms starting in early 1988. Armed conflicts in East Africa have made it difficult for experts to detect breeding areas and eradicate the pests, which can seriously damage food crops.

Russia to try to bring home 'Saddamites'

MOSCOW (AP) — The government Tuesday condemned a group of Russian nationalists who flew to Iraq intent on fighting allied forces and ordered an end to the vigilante mission, a news agency reported. The 10 volunteers, wearing red berets and black leather holsters, left Moscow for Iraq Sunday, vowing to fight alongside Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's troops. The trip was organised by extremist activists led by Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, according to the ITAR-TASS news agency. Mr. Zhirinovskiy, staging an airport send-off in front of television cameras, said the fighters had received special training to fight the "empire of evil" — the United States. Russian nationalists have condemned President Boris Yeltsin for supporting the U.N. sanctions against Iraq and Serbs in former Yugoslavia, both former Soviet allies.

Oxfam: Iraq faces humanitarian crisis

LONDON (AP) — Oxfam, the only non-government aid agency operating in southern Iraq, said Tuesday that Iraq faces a humanitarian crisis. In some towns there are lakes of raw sewage because pumps were damaged during the Gulf war, the agency said. A team of Oxfam workers visited northern and southern Iraq this month. They were there during U.S.-led bombing raids to enforce a "no-fly" zone imposed by the allies, but witnessed no attacks. The group urged an easing of U.N. sanctions, including an increase in the amount of oil Iraq is allowed to sell in order to buy humanitarian goods. Baghdad has rejected the quota offered, saying it should be increased. Oxfam also said the exemptions under U.N. sanctions imposed after Iraq's defeat by the allies should be revised to include school books. "While we saw no evidence of severe malnutrition, we are convinced that the plight of ordinary people is worsening as food prices rise," said Oxfam Associate Director David Jones.

American to receive Wolf prize for art

TEL AVIV (AP) — American sculptor and multimedia artist Bruce Nauman will be awarded the 1993 Wolf prize in the arts, the foundation announced Tuesday. Mr. Nauman, 51, who lives in Galisteo, New Mexico, uses a wide range of media in his art, including paper, video, neon, steel and holography. The Wolf Foundation said Mr. Nauman was chosen for the \$100,000 prize "for exploring complex human emotional and psychological states while examining the very premises of art-making itself." Calling Nauman "one of the great artists of this century," the foundation also cited the "originality, imagination, wit and moral power" in his work. The Wolf prizes were established in 1975 by the late Ricardo Wolf to promote science and art for the benefit of mankind. A German-born physicist, he immigrated to Cuba before World War II and served as its ambassador to Israel, where he died in 1981. Prizes also are awarded for physics, chemistry, medicine, agriculture and mathematics. They will be presented by Israel's president on May 16.

Vatican diplomat visits Morocco

VATICAN CITY (AP) — A top Vatican diplomat is visiting Morocco to meet King Hassan II to try to further the Middle East peace process, Pope John Paul II's spokesman said. The trip by Monsignor Jean-Louis Tauran, the Vatican's foreign minister, "is part of the initiatives recently undertaken by the Holy See regarding the situation in the Middle East, in particular the Holy Land, and the peace process," said Joaquin Navarro, the Vatican spokesman. Mr. Navarro noted that King Hassan is president of the Committee of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference for Jerusalem. Lack of an international statute to establish official Vatican-Israeli ties has been a major block to the question of Israel's borders also figure strongly in the Vatican's withholding of official recognition of Israel. Lack of formal ties in turn has kept the Vatican from having a role in the Middle East peace talks, a role it would very much like to have, in part to watch out for the interest of Palestinian Christians. The prospect of formalising ties improved last summer when both the Vatican and Israel held high-level talks. The Pope was invited to Israel by Shimon Peres, who as Israeli foreign minister met here with the Pope in October.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 72311-19

PROGRAMME TWO
17:30 Pif on Hercules
17:45 Les MAGAZINES
18:15 L'ecole des fans
19:00 News in French
19:15 Fusions
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Uncle Buck
21:10 The Human Factor
22:00 News in English
22:30 Movie of the week: "Amazing Grace of Chuck"

PRAYER TIMES

05:06 Fajr
06:28 (Sunrise) Dhuha
11:08 Dhuhr
14:44 'Asr
17:09 Maghreb
18:29 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedish Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 634590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Sabe Church Tel. 661757

Terraviva Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 625431
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 711331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 627981, 683326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 623524 and 654923
Church of the Nazareth Tel. 675691

Min./max. temp.
Amman 4 / 15
Aqaba 10 / 21
Desert 2 / 16
Jordan Valley 10 / 20

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

A cold front will affect Jordan as of Thursday afternoon. Therefore, clouds will increase gradually, a drop in temperature will take place and there will be a chance for scattered showers of rain. Winds will be southwesterly moderate, freshening in the afternoon. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and sea calm.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

AMMAN:
Dr. Fakhri Abu Tayeb 883880
Dr. Salah Al 'Usoud 649028
Dr. Isam Al Asmar 890504
Dr. Ahmad Khamsi 747684
Firas pharmacy 661912
Fardous pharmacy 776336
Al Asena pharmacy 637055
Najrouk pharmacy 623672
Al Sahab pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shuqran pharmacy 637660
Najib pharmacy 847632

EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Complaints 623101
Abdali Telephone Repair 661101
Jordan Television 723111
Radio Jordan 674111
Water Authority 660100

IRBID:

Dr. Mohammad Al Ta'ani 273711
Al Quds pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Izzeddin Mustafa 985417
Khafich pharmacy 985417

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE

NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:	
Salahi Abu Tayeb	885880
Salahi Al 'Usoud	490528
Isam Al Asmar	890504
Ahmad Khamis	747684
as pharmacy	661912
zouh pharmacy	776334
Asma pharmacy	637025
zouh pharmacy	623672
Salan pharmacy	636730
asna pharmacy	646495
asna pharmacy	637660
gh pharmacy	847632

RUJ:	
Mohammad Al Ta'ani	273711
Quds pharmacy (-)	

RUJ:	
zafadin Mustafa	985417
zafadin pharmacy	985417

EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate	
Rescue	630341
Civil Defence Emergency	630341
Rescue Police	192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	891228
Blood Bank	775121
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	893390
Public Security Department	630321
Hotel Complaints	605800
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	
Complaints	897467
Amman Municipality	
Complaints	787111
Telephone Information	
(directory assistance)	121
Overseas Calls	010230
Central Amman Telephone	
Repairs	623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	661101
Jordan Television	773111
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	690100

Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power	
C Flight	636381
RJ Flight Information	68-3320
Queen Alia Intl. Airport	68-3320

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Kusaid Medical Centre	81381332
Khafich Maternity, J. Amn.	6422816
Alkhal Maternity, J. Amn.	6424112
Jabal Amman Maternity	642362
Mathas, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shamsi	66417114
Shamsi Hospital	669131
University Hospital	843845
Al-Mushar Hospital	6672279
The Islamic, Abdali	66612757
Al-Ahli, Abdali	6616466
Al-Jalal, J. Amn.	7711013
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafiah	7511126
Army, Marka	89161715
Queen Alia Hospital	60224050
Amal Hospital	674155
ZARQA:	
Zarga Govt. Hospital	(09)983323

Zarga National Hospital	(09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital	(09)966732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital	(09)969998
Princess Basma Hospital	(02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital	(02)272275
Ibn Al Nafies Hospital	(02)247100
AQAAR:	
Princess Haya Hospital	(03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by RJ Jordanian (RJ) International Airport Tel. (02)5280-5, where should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flight (Terminals 1-2)	
From Singapore, Kuala Lumpur	

OTHER FLIGHTS (Terminal 2)

06:15 Oman (RJ)
06:15 Riyadh (RJ)
06:30 Cairo, Amman (RJ)
06:30 New Delhi (RJ)
06:45 Beirut (RJ)
06:50 Colombo (RJ)
07:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
07:00 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
07:00 London, Berlin (RJ)
07:10 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
07:10 Bangkok, Calcutta (RJ)
07:10 Rome (RJ)
07:20 Athens, Larnaca (RJ)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

(Terminal 1)

06:15 Beirut (RJ)
06:30 Rome (RJ)
06:45 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
06:50 Amsterdam, Toronto (RJ)
07:00 Larnaca, Athens (RJ)
07:00 Paris (RJ)
07:10 London (RJ)
07:10 Jeddah (RJ)
07:20 Bahrain Doha (RJ)
07:20 Damascus (RJ)
07:30 Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
07:30 Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)

MARKET PRICES

Up/Down price in the past	
Apple	700 / 300
Banana	700 / 700
Banana (Makassar)	640 / 640
Beans	420 / 420
Cabbage	160 / 160
Carrot	250 / 100
Cauliflower	210 / 160
Cauliflower (large)	350 / 160
Cauliflower (small)	320 / 160
Eggplant	320 / 160
Garlic	600 / 320
Onion (dry)	210 / 160
Onion (green)	240 / 160
Orange	440 / 320
Pepper (hot)	380 / 120
Pepper (sweet)	180 / 120
Potato	230 / 160
Spinach	240 / 160

CBJ lowers interest with eye on development

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Wednesday announced new regulations, described by Governor Mohammad Said Nabulsi as aimed at supporting the economic sector in the Kingdom.

The regulations are designed to make available sufficient funds to finance areas in the national economy which are given priority over others by offering them below market interest rates, Dr. Nabulsi said.

According to the announcement: — Interest rates on loans granted by the CBJ to the Agricultural Credit Corporation

(ACC) will be reduced from 5 to 4 per cent annually.

— Interest on loans granted by the CBJ to the Industrial Development Bank will decrease from 8.25 per cent to 7 per cent annually.

— Interest on loans granted to banks and financial institutions to help them stimulate national exports will decrease to 3.5 per cent annually, while the commission charged by these banks from exporters will be lowered to 2.5 per cent.

The CBJ governor said these regulations will take effect as of the beginning of February. Dr. Nabulsi said the CBJ is



Mohammad Said Al Nabulsi studying a mechanism for a special fund that would be entrusted to provide capital to finance exports.

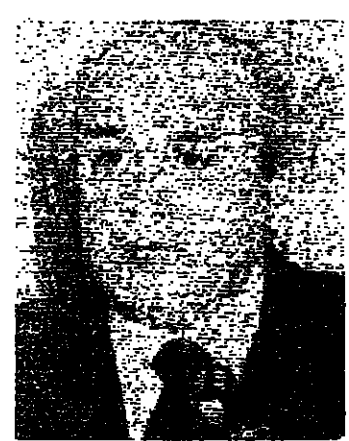
Tenth party gets a license

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Progress and Justice Party (PJP), Wednesday became the tenth political group to be legalised in Jordan.

In a statement to the press, the party's temporary chairman Zeid Hamzeh said he had received official notification of his party's legalisation from Interior Minister Jawdat Shouh, and he was seizing the opportunity to emphasize the party's determination and pledge to work towards the attainment of the Kingdom's national aspirations.

He said the party pledges renewed allegiance to His Majesty King Hussein and will adhere closely to the provisions of the National Charter and political pluralism.

Last Sunday, the government legalised the Jordan People's



Zeid Hamzeh Democratic Party (JPDP), the fourth leftist party to be legalised. The three others are the Jordan

Democratic Progressive Party, the Jordan Communist Party, and the Jordan Arab Socialist Baath Party.

The government earlier legalised the Jordan National Alliance Group, the Popular Union Party, the Pledge Party, the Future Party and the Islamic Action Front.

In its manifesto, the Progress and Justice Party pledged to work for national unity, uphold institutions under the rule of law, serve in the light of the principles of the Great Arab Revolt, contribute towards the advancement of the status of women in society, and help society's members attain equal opportunities.

Applications from two other political groups seeking legal status are pending a decision by the Ministry of Interior.

Baathists pledge loyalty to King and Constitution

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday received a cable of thanks and appreciation from the Jordanian Baath Arab Socialist Party on the occasion of licensing the party.

The party paid tribute to King Hussein's pan-Arab stands and his efforts aimed at safeguarding Arab interests.

"Your distinguished pan-Arab stands in the past years have added greatly to our national

reserves in Jordan, thus promoting our status among Arab states," the party said in its cable. "As we highly appreciate your sincere efforts, we would like to affirm our continued loyalty and keenness to adhere to the higher interests of our people in accordance with the Constitution and the law," it added.

The party received legal recognition by the Ministry of Interior on Jan. 18.

Hadid to head Red Crescent

By Elia Nasrallah
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Mohammad Hadid has been elected president of the Jordan National Red Crescent Society (JNRCS), succeeding Ahmad Abu Qoura who has resigned for health reasons, JNRCS statement said Wednesday.

The JNRCS paid tribute to Dr. Abu Qoura who served as president since 1964.

Dr. Hadid told the Jordan Times that as JNRCS president he will take charge of the society's Al Hilal Hospital in Ashrafieh through the help of the Red Cross Societies in Japan, Luxembourg and Germany.

The hospital will be expanded by a 250-square metre annex, Dr. Hadid said.

He said the new addition will include new X-ray and ultrasound units.

The Japanese Red Cross Society offered \$140,000 to finance the equipment; \$75,000 has already been received by the JNRCS, Dr. Hadid added.

The project will increase the number of hospital beds from 64 to 100, and a third floor will be added to the hospital, Dr. Hadid said.

He said Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath was instrumental in securing a pledge of 450,000 Swiss francs from the Luxembourg branch.

The German Red Cross Society has pledged \$250,000 to equip operation theaters, he added.

The society is assured of sufficient funds for the structure and has already obtained more than half the funds required, and it will continue its endeavours in modernisation and improvement, Dr. Hadid said.

Dr. Hadid said patients are classified into three categories, with the needy paying nominal fees.

But on the whole, the Hilal Hospital seeks no profits and offers services at rates far less than any other private hospital in the country, Dr. Hadid added.

Dr. Hadid, who has recently returned from a trip to Germany to secure further aid for the society and its hospital, said a delegation representing the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is due in Amman next week, and the JNRCS hopes to secure pledges from them for the hospital.

Dr. Hadid said that by Feb. 20, the start of holy month of Ramadan, the JNRCS plans to distribute food, clothing and blankets to some 8,000 needy families.

In 1992 the society distributed similar aid to 12,050 needy families in the country, he said.

He was awarded several distinguished medals in recognition of his humanitarian services. They include the Golden Iraqi Red Crescent Society Medal, the U.S. Red Cross Medal, the International Humanitarian Award - 1992 and the Cross of Honour from the Knights of Malta.

House votes to segregate sexes

Brotherhood-led move bars mixed sports centres

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Lower House of Parliament Wednesday passed a draft law that bans government from licensing recreational centres, sports clubs and swimming pools that do not segregate men and women.

Overruling the recommendation of the Judiciary Committee, the House voted 34 to 19 in favour of a motion by members of the Muslim Brotherhood Bloc to restrict the Ministry of Youth from licensing sports clubs that do not segregate men and women in compliance with Islamic Sharia.

The Judiciary Committee had recommended the House delete Article 3 Item (C) of a draft law on youth welfare, which gives the authority to the Ministry of Youth to license "recreational and sports centres, including swimming pools and life guards," to avoid conflict with five Brotherhood deputies over observing Sharia.

"Because sports centres include places where members of the two sexes can meet while performing sports activities ... in

violation of Islamic Sharia; something which our people, nation and values reject," Islamist members of the committee called on the House to keep the article after adding a phrase banning mixed sports clubs.

Chairman of the Judiciary Committee Salim Al Zoubi, the only deputy to argue against the ban, said the House could avoid the conflict by agreeing to delete the article. In that case, he said, the draft law will not conflict with Islamic teachings.

Islamist deputies however argued that abolishing the article will not solve the point of contention and insisted on the ban.

"Our philosophy, thoughts and beliefs call for the segregation," Brotherhood Deputy Abdullah Al Akaleh said.

Independent Islamist Deputy Abdul Baqi Gammo said the committee was trying to remove "supervision that guarantees our dignity" by proposing the deletion of the item.

"The Jordanian law gives men and women the right to run for Parliament. Are we going to call for the separation of men and women in the House if women become members of the House in



Abdul Baqi Gammo

the future," Mr. Zoubi said in a lonely yet futile attempt to counter the Islamists' demand.

The imposition of the ban was seen by observers as a victory for the Muslim Brotherhood Bloc which, according to one deputy, "successfully railroaded the House into adopting its views."

The vote on the article took place in the absence of the majority of government members and 27 deputies. This was seen by observers as a factor leading to



Abdullah Al Akaleh

the success of the Islamists' motion.

"After the break for the noon prayers, a large number of deputies left the House while most Brotherhood deputies went back to the session. This created an imbalance favouring the Islamists," one deputy told the Jordan Times.

"The government was not also there to defend its own draft law," said the deputy, who requested anonymity.

The deputy also pointed to the fact that Minister of Justice Youssef Al Mubaiden and Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Atef Al Bush voted to amend the government's law.

He said some members of the Judiciary Committee supported the Islamist's amendment even though they had earlier adopted the view of the committee.

Observers at the House attributed these deputies change of heart to the fear of appearing as opponents of implementing Islamic rulings in front of the electorate.

While Minister of Youth Saich Irshaidat said it was not clear whether the draft law will affect already licensed sports clubs and swimming pools in the country, Mr. Zoubi said these places will have to observe the new regulations when they apply for the renewal of their licences.

Yet both Dr. Irshaidat and Mr. Zoubi confirmed that hotels will not be affected by the draft legislation.

The draft law will not be effective unless it is approved by the Upper House of Parliament and endorsed by His Majesty the King.

Publishers to launch fight against piracy

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Publishers are preparing for an intensive public awareness campaign on what they see as the dangers of plagiarism and piracy practices which infringe upon authors' fundamental rights.

A director of a publishing company in Jordan claims that books are reprinted or photocopied in neighbouring countries without the author's knowledge and sold in Jordan at less than their original prices; "there is no tax payment no control over books passing through the Jordanian borders which encourages many offenders to perpetrate such acts," the publisher said.

He said his company has filed seven cases in court, and so far only one case was judged in their favour. However, their opponents have appealed the verdict, and the other six cases remain unsettled.

"Filing cases would be to no avail if the public lacked awareness of the seriousness of such acts," he added.

From a judicial point of view, one lawyer who preferred anonymity, said that

though the present Jordanian law concerning copyright is originally based on the British law, it suffers from dangerous gaps since it lacks detailed explanation on each article as is the case in the British law.

"Copyright was and still is an ambiguous notion that is interpreted differently from one person to another," the lawyer said. "Had the Jordanian law provided an adequate and precise definition of the author's rights, such piracy practices would be less prevalent than they are at present."

Another lawyer, Tarik Nabeel, said a major defect in the law is Article 20 which grants scientific and cultural institutions the right to reproduce or photocopy any book without obtaining the author's permission.

Art. 20 of the copyright law, which was passed by the Lower House of Parliament on February 1992, states: "Libraries, non-commercial reference centres, scientific centres, and cultural and scientific institutions can photocopy any literary work without the author's permission on condition that the number of copies be limited to the need of these

institutions and there is no infringement upon the author's rights."

During the debate over the copyright law, some deputies, fearful of manipulation of exploitation, lobbied for additional amendments to the article to further protect the author.

Deputy Issa Raymonid voiced discontent over cases of violation that might erupt if Art. 20 was approved.

Fakri Ka'war, president of the Jordanian Writers Association, warned of the dangers of manipulation.

Dr. Mohammad Al Haj said that allowing scientific institutions to reproduce publications entails serious implications, adding that there is a large number of institutions that can be labelled as scientific.

"If all of the scientific centres, institutions and universities are allowed to photocopy and reproduce books, who is the author writing for?" Muslim Brotherhood Deputy Al Haj questioned.

Countering these arguments, other deputies protested that more consideration should be given to college and university students who are unable to afford expensive

academic text books. Deputy Hussein Mujalli, then chairman of the Judicial Committee, stressed on paying particular attention to "the society's interests" and not only to that of the writers.

Still Art. 20 was approved and endorsed.

At present, publishers and bookshop-owners complain of continuing practices by some university professors who, entitled to free curriculum textbooks, photocopy and sell these books to students for their own benefit.

"What is worse is that these practices are also encouraging students and other professors to follow suit," the publisher said.

Increasing complaints of book piracy are being registered with lawyers and publishers. The fury of some writers over what they see as an infringement upon their profession has led them to file complaints in court.

While all related cases were cancelled due to the general pardon issued by His Majesty King Hussein on November 12, 1993 some publishers intend to launch large public awareness campaigns in Jordan before heading to court again.

Government supports private-sector farming

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Agriculture Faysal Khasawneh said in a statement to the Aleppo-based International Centre for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA) that based on extensive analysis of the agricultural situation in 1990 and 1991, Jordan is adopting a general policy which urges that agricultural production remain in the hands of the private sector. Dr. Khasawneh added that the policy is supported by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

He said Jordan's agricultural sector has been negatively affected by regional tensions, unreliable water resources, adverse weather conditions, changing markets and the world-wide economic recession.

Jordan's response has been to thoroughly reassess its agricultural objectives and strategies, he said.

But the situation has been transient since policies have changed over the past few years, often reflecting the viewpoints of different governments, the minister said.

Institutional policy-making requires stable institutions, he said.

Dr. Khasawneh said that while the country favours private sec-

tor, the Ministry of agriculture will continue to act as coordinator to facilitate decision-making at all levels.

He said Jordan was giving priority to the production of vegetables, cereals, horticultural crops, livestock, poultry, feed and fodder, in an effort to increase Jordan's self-sufficiency.

Dr. Khasawneh said Jordan plans to specialise in off-season vegetables, which yield higher returns than cereals; thus profits can be used to import cereals.

The Minister said investments in agro-industries will be encouraged as an outlet for perishable produce.

Although water remains a scarce resource, with a bit of effort in management, such as utilization of the water harvesting technique, one can make surprising improvements in the productivity of the land, Dr. Khasawneh said.

He said plans have been drawn to construct earth dams and collection ponds that will make use of surface water.

In the Al Hamman basin near the Iraqi border the government built a 10.5 million cubic metre dam which filled to four million cubic metres with just one rainfall, the minister added.

Aqaba quarter gets facelift

AMMAN (Petra) — Work has started on a JD 1.6 million project for the development of the southern parts of the old quarter in Aqaba, implementing an agreement signed earlier this month between the Housing and Urban Development Department (HUDD) and the Jordan Economic and Social Organisation for Retired Servicemen (JESORS) which was granted the contract.

The announcement was made by Mahmoud Abbadi, director of the projects department, at HUDD's Aqaba division who said the project entails the development of 800 households and commercial units on 125,000 square metres.

The renovation will include a water network of 8,000 metres, sewerage system of 6,495 metres and a 5,460 metres canal to drain waste water.

Retaining walls and roads will be built, and electric power cables will be laid during the 14 months of the project, Mr. Abbadi said.

Development of the northern quarters of the city will begin in three months at a cost of JD 1.4 million, he said.

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WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition entitled "Latin American Countries in France" at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition entitled "Modernist Still Life Photographed" at the American Centre.
- ★ Exhibition entitled "Dhanna, a Village from South Jordan" displaying photos and other items of the village at the Royal Cultural Centre.

FILM

- ★ Clint Eastwood's 1986 film "Heartbreak Ridge" at 5 p.m. at the American Centre (130 min., rated R)

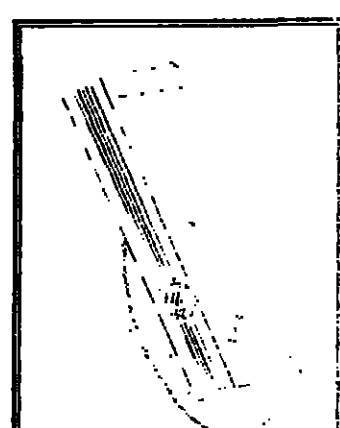
Canada, Jordan to begin business council

AMMAN (J.T.) — Canadian Ambassador Andrew Robinson announced Wednesday that a Jordan-Canada Business Council (JCBC) will be formally inaugurated Jan. 30 during a visit to Jordan by a delegation of high-ranking Canadian businessmen.

The agreement, creating the council will be signed by representatives of the Canada-Arab Business Council (CABC) and the Jordan Businessmen's Association (JBA) at a ceremony on Jan. 30, in the presence of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Transport, Ali Subeiman, and the Canadian ambassador.

The delegation from the CABC comprising six members of the council's executive and 14 associated senior businessmen, will visit Jordan at the invitation of the JBA. While in Amman it will explore the possibilities of expanding trade and business relations between Jordan and Canada.

The delegation will be received in Amman by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Deputy Prime Minister Ali Subeiman and other leading figures in Jordanian government and business circles.



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Refreshments will be served during the intermission

Jordan Times

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Juxtaposed priorities

THE LOWER House of Parliament's resolution yesterday to segregate men and women at swimming pools and other recreational facilities and sports centres in the Kingdom reinforces our belief that many of our deputies do not know what democracy is all about. The constitution of the land clearly states that personal freedoms shall be guaranteed. Yet, all this House seems to be doing is curtail basic human rights, whether by curbing freedoms of the press or outlawing free financial investments or banning alcohol and now by trying to segregate the sexes. To do the latter, by the force of law, is to institutionalise new forms of dictatorship based on the misuse of old democratic values. The democracy that brought the 80 deputies to the chambers of free thought and free debate must not and, by the will of people, should not, give the honourable gentlemen the right to legislate, legalise or outlaw our personal preferences or choices. Those who do not like half of the society to live, work and think with the other half can do so in the privacy of their own homes and backyards, but cannot impose their will on the whole society of modern state, which prides itself on respecting basic human rights. This is a very serious issue. Liberal and reasonable minded people in this country should not sit idle while they see the "people's representatives" infringe on their rights and freedoms as citizens. The issue here is not desegregation or segregation at swimming pools and other public facilities. It is about the core of the debate of the sort of democracy that we seek: Tribal or civic, forward looking or ultimately backward. If we choose the former, in either case we will continue to oppress the individual with our tribal ethics, some of which are totally unsuitable to the modern age. If we opt for the latter, which we strongly believe we should do, then we ought to free the individual from the shackles of dark-age restrictions that led to our present-day backwardness. Segregation at swimming pools or as in earlier examples at government departments is only the first step towards segregation in all walks of life. The conservative-reactionary alliance seems determined to achieve this goal because it strives to control people and their behaviour. It is unfortunate that progressive forces are not only submitting to this, but some of the so-called liberals and leftists are joining hands with the ultra-conservative camp to help it achieve its agenda. The supposedly open-minded Cabinet of ours and its parliamentary base are to blame for this regression. This is because His Majesty the King's successive governments have consistently had as their mandate programmes that are supposed to take Jordan into the modern ages, into the 21st century. And it is not only that. The present government has its guidelines also embedded in the respect for democracy and basic freedoms. The Cabinet and its loyal bloc in Parliament should not always be taken by surprise by the ultra-conservatives' movements and actions and should always be prepared to put up a fight when issues like these come up in the House. This government should, in theory at least, represent progress. And as such it should defend the values of individuals in the country and not just the objectives of organised groups and other political bodies. But the ultimate responsibility rests on the shoulders of all open-minded and democracy-conscious groups and citizens themselves. Unless they create the civic structures that could shield and protect their freedoms and values, they are bound to be the losers. We should not just sing the praises of democracy while forgetting about our responsibilities and duties as enlightened citizens. Democracy is a political tool but liberty is an inherent right of ours. The ultra conservatives' onslaught on individual liberties, under whatever name it comes, must be resisted in order to be able to move forward.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

ISRAELI MUST be angry because for the first time in its history it finds the secretary general of the United Nations demanding sanctions on it for defying U.N. resolutions, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Wednesday. Should the Security Council accept the secretary general's recommendation, and apply sanctions on the Jewish state, the world community will have reason to believe that the world organisation is trying to reestablish its credibility and impose respect, said the daily. The paper noted that the U.N. Security Council has, to date, been accused by the majority of nations of adopting double standards in its dealings with world issues. It said that the world organisation, which imposed its will on Iraq under the pressure of the major powers of the world, is expected to apply similar measures on questions related to Palestine and former Yugoslavia again. The move of Boutros Ghali, to try to force Israel to implement Security Council Resolution 799, concerning the deported Palestinians, the paper pointed out, presents a new chance for the world community to start implementing the other resolutions as well and opens the door for real progress towards the attainment of genuine peace.

THE U.N. secretary general's move to enforce Security Council Resolution 799 was welcomed by Sawi Al Shaab daily which said that the world organisation had given Israel ample to comply with the resolution and return the expellees. The paper said that the secretary general of the United Nations sent Israel one envoy after another trying to persuade the Rabin government to rescind its decision of deporting the Palestinians, to no avail. There is no doubt that the Rabin government has been encouraged by the U.S. administration to pursue its atrocities against the Arab people, hence its defiance of the resolution and the world community's decision, said the daily. Now that the U.N. credibility was questioned and in the light of the embarrassing situation resulting from its double standard dealings, the secretary general decided that something should be done to help the world organisation regain its confidence and self-esteem, the paper said.

The rule of law and justice

By Pascal B. Karney

In his book "The Law and the Constitution" Sir Ivor Jennings says: "To maintain peace and to secure that disputes shall be settled on the basis of legal rights, it is necessary to establish the rule of law; that is to establish order and then to maintain peace through the settlement of disputes in accordance with law." To raise this principle to the international plane, the Security Council members, particularly the permanent influential members, must see to it that its resolutions are just and that they are implemented in all relevant cases. In other words, the council must uphold the rule of law in all international disputes and put it into force without being swayed by partiality to one side of the conflict or to the other.

The Security Council has issued Resolution 799, of Dec. 18, 1992, which condemns Israel for the unlawful and inhuman expulsion of more than 400 Palestinians from their homes and called upon it to return them safely and immediately. Israel's action is compounded by the fact that among the expellees there were about 15 expelled by mistake. So far, the said resolution has not been implemented and the Secretary-General of the U.N. had sent two envoys to convince Israel to return the expellees as required by the resolution, but to no avail.

This is not the first time that Israel refuses to abide by the United Nations resolutions. There are in the files of the United Nations scores of resolutions passed against Israel, some by the General Assembly, others by the Security Council, but Israel rejected them all and put them in the waste-paper basket while the United Nations, through the predominance of the U.S., let them die a slow death. On the other hand, where Israel is not involved, the Security Council is quite eager to implement its resolutions. The continuous application for more than two years of the sanctions imposed upon Iraq is just one example of the partiality of the council members and of the non-application of the rule of law in all cases and on all states concerned.

There is a Roman law adage which says *Fiat justitia, ruat coelum*, which means that justice must be done even if the heavens fall. Justice must be done to the Palestinians and particularly to those who were expelled at random from their homes without

trial or the slightest investigation and are now stranded in no man's land between Lebanon and Israel.

With regard to the application of justice I wish to mention a case which occurred during the British mandate over Palestine when the Palestinian Arabs revolted in 1936 and thereafter against the infamous British policy. The case can be outlined as follows: In order to enable the British armed forces to combat the Arab fighters who were entrenched in the old quarter of Jaffa, the Palestine government dropped pamphlets in Arabic from an airplane over Jaffa telling the inhabitants of the old quarter of the city that it wanted to demolish the dilapidated houses so as to replace the quarter, organise it and make it a healthier place to live in. The pamphlets requested therefore that the inhabitants of the old quarter evacuate it for safety reasons. The Palestine authorities also posted warnings telling the people of the old quarter to leave their houses for their safety. What was noticeable was the fact that neither the pamphlets nor the posters were signed by any official of the Palestine government. But at the bottom of the pamphlets and the posters was written: "Printed in the Palestine Government Printing Press."

Eventually, the inhabitants of the old quarter had to evacuate their houses. However, the real purpose for demolishing the old quarter was not for planning or for aesthetic purposes, but for facilitating the entry of the British army into Jaffa and crushing the resistance of the Arab fighters entrenched there. Subsequently, some of the owners of the demolished houses brought legal action against the government of Palestine in the High Court of Justice to show cause for the demolition and eventually claim damages before the competent court. What is relevant for our purpose here are the judgements delivered respectively by the then Chief Justice Sir Michael McDonnell and Puisne Justice Manning sitting in the High Court of Justice. Both judges delivered separate stinging judgements against the Palestine government.

With regard to the absence of signature on the pamphlets, by any government official, and to the concealment of the real purpose of the demolition of the old quarter of Jaffa, the chief justice said that the Palestine government "evinced unparalleled lack of moral courage" and added: "I

am surprised that I do not find a single responsible official of the Palestine government who is willing to append his signature to those pamphlets and warnings. There is no doubt it would have been more honourable for the government if it had truthfully and courageously stated that the basic purpose of the intended destruction was for the defence of Palestine (under the Defence Emergency Regulations), which means in effect to facilitate the entry of the armed and police forces to the densely populated quarter of the town instead of throwing dust in the people's eyes by pretending that the aim of the destruction was for aesthetic reasons, for planning of the town and public health."

Judge Manning on the other hand, stated among other matters: "In any event, the government has hidden the truth and mixed bitterness with honey by telling the people that the purpose of the project was for the improvement of Jaffa." Following the delivery of the judgement of the High Court of Justice, the chief justice Sir Michael McDonnell was placed on retirement by the British government and Puisne Justice Manning was transferred to one of the British African colonies. In order to pay tribute to the two justices, the Palestine Arab Higher Committee (which then represented the Palestinian people) held a farewell banquet in their honour. In his farewell speech, Chief Justice McDonnell said, among other things, that although he was put on retirement and his colleague was transferred elsewhere, he would care less as long as his conscience was clear and he had applied justice.

Hopefully, the Israeli High Court of Justice, which is reviewing the case of the Palestinian expellees, will follow in the steps of the ex-Palestine High Court of Justice and pass a judgement upholding the rule of law and justice and ordering the government of Israel to return the expellees to their homes. Such a judgement should therefore be in conformity with Security Council Resolution 799 and with international law and international conventions, particularly the 4th Geneva Convention of 1949, to which Israel is a party. Indeed, regardless of internal Israeli laws, international law and international conventions override and take precedence over them. This is a well recognised principle of international law.

The ingredients of democracy

By Izzat R. Dajani

ONE OF the most impressive statements often repeated by new U.S. President Bill Clinton was that he wanted to stay in touch with the people. He realised the nature of his job as much contact with the citizenry as he would have wished. Yet he did not want to lose touch. He did not want to get distant. He did not want to be far removed from the masses and risk becoming alien to their very needs and aspirations. People's faith him and in his ability to deliver solutions to their grievances got him the job of president. His success or failure will be realized as time goes by. But they are not the criteria we are interested in for this analysis. Staying in touch with your people, as presented by Mr. Clinton, is the theme which we will tackle comparing it to the general trend for most leaders and politicians in the Arab World of staying out of touch with their citizens.

Looking at politics in the Middle East, we find a long series of rulers who are forcibly imposed on their people. They either drive to office in a tank or are driven out of office by a tank. In most parts of the Arab World there seems to be no relationship between the rulers and the ruled, the oppressors and the oppressed. An odd relationship exists between those whose liberty is restricted and those who impose the restriction.

Many myths exist that restrictions on individuals are for the purpose of making them better off. Varied government interventions in different Arab countries often change people so that their future choices differ substantially from what they would have chosen if the interventions had not taken place. Sadly, the impairment caused is relatively permanent and the restrictions on liberty rather unforgotten.

During the recent crisis in the Gulf, Jordan was among the very few countries in the Middle East going through some democratisation and more liberalism. The Jordanian Parliament, though not perfect, was quite representative. It brought the leadership closer to the sentiments and aspirations of the people. In most parts of the Arab World parliaments are either non-existent or simply "parrot" institutions. Parliaments are merely rubber stamps for gov-

ernment policies. Even in older, quasi democracies, such as Egypt, parliament is muted. The Arab Gulf states produced a new "innovation" to democratic rule, i.e. the consultative council. Members of such councils are appointed by the rulers, paid for generously by the same rulers, and fired at discretion by these very rulers! The gap between the executive branch and the citizenry at large remains as wide as ever. Hence, many leaders stay, with persistence, out of touch with their people.

Many criteria seem to identify Arab rulership. Slogans are often used as substitutes for policy or masks for lack of it. Many governments supply illusions instead of clearcut solutions. This approach leads dramatically to masking the problem and induces people to think it does not exist or things are better the way they are.

Governance in many parts of the Arab World is rather unique; it takes the form of making people act against their own will for their respective "own good". When governments do wrong, they claim it is in order to do good. Arab rulership in the Western coalition against Iraq was a grave act against people's wishes and aspirations in most Arab countries. Yet this wrongdoing was portrayed as being in the best interests of the people. In the very words of Professor Kenneth Stein, director of the Middle East Research Programme at Emory University, if it were not for Arab partnership in the coalition, the United States could not have ever launched any military attack on Iraq. Arab partnership, even symbolically, was more than important for realising Operation Desert Storm. Iraq did wrong by invading and annexing Kuwait. But the Arab World did more harm by allowing foreign intervention to replace a possible Arab solution to the crisis. This partnership led to the military and political destruction of an Arab country, massive expenditure on the war from the coffers of rich Arab states, enhancement of the strategic power of the all-time enemy and threat — Iran, increased intransigence by Israel, unfavourable terms for the weakened Arabs to attend the peace conference with Israel, increased mistrust between Arabs, expanded hatred

between the have and have-nots, and the rise to alarming levels of militancy and fundamentalism. Yet, many slogans still insist that this was all done for the benefit and betterment of Arabs. It is worthy to note in this context that if leaders, politicians or decision-makers have no loyalties, they are useless. If their loyalties do not relate to the real needs of the people, then the quality of judgement may be appealing but certainly not useful.

This system of governance centres on allying or elevating fears. It reiterates various issues until they seem true. Important facts are constantly ignored or omitted. It denies people the understanding they need to pass judgements that are essential to the "democratic" societies, and democratic rule.

In politics, the truth seems to be violated by three personality types. To intense ideologues, truth is just a phenomenon. To opportunists, truth is irrelevant. To self-deceivers, it takes less effort to pretend that one is a wonderful world than to make it so. Such violations of truth are bad enough for every personality type, but a catastrophe when all three violations exist in the Arab decision-making apparatus. It is further complicated when the concept of governance includes restrictions on liberty which can take the form of physical or legal coercion. It is sad to witness how public problems are treated as ropes to be sold rather than knots to be untied.

Leaders need a sense of history to avoid living only in the present and assuming that their own era is eternal and insulated from change. They need to keep a progressive outlook and support freedom. Viewing issues with a "wide-angle lens" allows them to witness the wide horizons between "reality and false" possible and ideal. It may also be important to have some friends who care neither about politics nor about their personal success. They need to get closer to the people. They need to stay in touch!

Many pies are inedible due to wrong or low quality ingredients. Yet, there are enough mature, well-nourished and A-class ingredients in the Arab World to produce the tastiest pie of freedom and prosperity. We, Arabs, certainly deserve better than what is on offer.

Yugoslavia peace plan on knife edge

By Patrick Worsnip
Reuters

GENEVA — An unexpected Croatian attack on the Serb-held enclave of Krajina is threatening to bring the whole flimsy edifice of the international peace plan for the former Yugoslavia crashing to the ground.

In Geneva, United Nations and European Community mediators are soldering on with talks on a settlement for neighbouring Bosnia, hoping against hope that the fighting in Krajina will fizzle out.

But even the phlegmatic conference spokesmen, Fred Eckhard, has referred publicly to the risk of the new crisis "substantially undermining the peace talks" if it gets worse.

Peace mediator Lord Owen described it as "potentially very serious."

Croatian President Franjo Tudjman sent troops on Friday — the day before the latest round of the Geneva talks — into a neutral U.N. monitored area on the edges of Krajina to secure a strategic bridge and airport near the Adriatic port of Zadar.

Krajina is part of Croatia but is inhabited mainly by Serbs. It has been under U.N. protection since a ceasefire in the war over Croatian independence a year ago, and Zagreb has frequently voiced frustration over its inability to regain control there.

Belgrade officials and Bosnian Serb leaders in Geneva denounced the Croatian move as an attempt to sabotage the talks. Bosnia's Muslim President Alija Izetbegovic, a nominal ally of the Bosnian Croats, also described its effects as negative.

While Serb leaders, blamed by the West for the mayhem in former Yugoslavia, have for once been able to accuse someone else of aggression, this has plainly brought them little satisfaction.

For whatever reason, they had decided in recent weeks to lend their support to the mediators' plan for a sovereign Bosnian Republic divided into 10 largely autonomous provinces.

Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic and President Dobrica Cosic of the rump Yugoslavia pressured Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic to accept the idea two weeks ago. He in turn persuaded his "parliament" in Bosnia to endorse it.

All three men have laid their credibility on the line with hard-line compatriots who demand a "greater Serbia" embracing parts of Croatia and Bosnia, and full support for fellow Serbs in falling regions like Krajina.

Lord Owen and his co-mediator Cyrus Vance have extracted promises from Mr. Cosic and Mr. Karadzic that they will not send troops to Krajina and will rely on redress from the United Nations over the Croatian action, which Mr. Vance and

Lord Owen have called unjustified, if understandable.

But diplomats doubt whether Serb leaders can stick to such promises if opposition at home gets too tough. They also doubt that the U.N., which has imposed economic sanctions on Serbia, is likely to take a pro-Serbian stance.

Already, Serbian volunteers from Belgrade are heading for Krajina and Yugoslavia has placed its army on a higher state of combat readiness.

The crisis in Croatia comes at a time when the Bosnia talks had reached a critical point.

The mediators scored a success when they got all three Bosnian factions — Serbs, Muslims and Croats — to agree to an outline constitution. But lengthy hag-

gling has begun over the proposed boundaries of the 10 provinces, which both Muslims and Serbs want changed in their favour.

Even should agreement be reached on this, and on a ceasefire, many analysts are sceptical on how the plan would work without creating what it was designed to avoid — de facto partition of Bosnia into three mini-states.

In theory, the fighting in Croatia has nothing to do with Bosnia. In practice, unless it is stopped quickly it can only inflame relations between the Bosnian communities and sap their confidence in the U.N.

Adding to the troubles of the mediators is uncertainty over the Yugoslav policies of new U.S.

President Bill Clinton, whose inauguration came just two days before the Croatian attack.

Mr. Clinton has been hinting for some time about tougher action against Serbia and has stopped short of endorsing the Vance-Owen plan. Some influential U.S. press commentators say the Geneva talks are just wasting time while the killing goes on in Bosnia.

Options before Mr. Clinton range from enforcing a U.N. "no-

fly zone" over Bosnia or launching air strikes against Serb targets, to pressing for the lifting of a U.N. arms embargo to allow the Bosnian Muslims to import weapons freely.

Mr. Vance opposes all such moves as likely to prolong the Yugoslav civil war. He said this week that lifting the arms embargo would "lead to a wider and deeper war which might spread into the lower part of the Balkans."

LETTERS

Lest we should forget

To the Editor:

Deportation of Palestinians from the occupied territories has been going on since 1967! The total number of Palestinians deported until recently was about 2,000. With the new batch of deportees, the total number has become close to 2,500.

The apor of the Security Council over Israel's refusal to return the deportees is an admirable case of "muscle flexing". The emphasis at present is on the 415. But the Security Council should not forget the other 2,000 deportees. They have also been deported illegally and there have been several Security Council resolutions (prior to the present resolution, number 799) related to their return (numbers 607, 608, 636, 641, 694, 726). Unfortunately, none of these were implemented.

The role of the Security Council is to see that Israel rescinds all deportation orders. Yes, all of them, and in compliance with several Security Council resolutions! The orders are absolutely illegal and, as such, all 2,415 deportees should be allowed to return to their homes and families.

Of course it is natural that the Security Council put special emphasis on the present crisis. This is related to humanitarian considerations and to the magnitude of the one blow deportation. It is also related to the effect the present deportations have over the peace process. But the United Nations should be careful lest there should be an unintentional U.N.-Israel trade off, namely: the return of the 415 and the forgetting of the other 2,000!

Hussein Nadeh,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and, preferably, address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.



How I met Saddam Hussein

For more than two years now, Dan Rather, Peter Jennings, Ted Koppel, Tom Brokaw and other media luminaries have tried repeatedly and unsuccessfully to meet the Iraqi president. I succeeded last week. My name is Amjad Tadros. I am the CBS News office manager in Amman.

ON JAN. 5, Al Ortiz, the CBS News vice president in charge of foreign news, called me. He pointed out what I already knew; that the situation in Iraq was heating up again. He asked me to arrange visas.

The following day happened to be the 72nd anniversary of Iraq's army, a national holiday. We tried and tried to get through to the Ministry of Information in Baghdad. Eventually, at 2:00 p.m., I managed to get to Mr. Najib Al Hadithi, the deputy-Iraqi minister of information. He was cordial and said that there should be no problem with the visas. He added that he was looking forward to see our producer Joe Haideman and our correspondent, Bob Simon, both of whom are very well known to the Ministry of Information in Baghdad.

It has always been tricky to get CBS News to Baghdad, and this time it was no different. The CBS team was due to arrive at Queen Alia International Airport from London at 6:20 p.m. The Iraqi embassy said it would stay open until 8 P.M. An hour and forty minutes to clear customs and immigration and get to the embassy? I didn't think we'd make it — and we didn't. But the embassy stayed open after 8 just to wait for us.

With our visas firmly stamped in the passports, we drove our caravan of GMC Suburban vans equipped with satellite dishes and were off on the fourteen hour drive to Baghdad.

In Baghdad, we stayed at the famous Al Rasheed Hotel. A place the foreign media calls "home." Al Rasheed, near the western bank of the Tigris, has a majestic look. It is built like a fortress — which turned out to be a very good thing.

From the moment I arrived at Al Rasheed, I shook hands and exchanged greetings with dozens of people there, never thinking that we would all share the same fate.

The following days were busy, to say the least. Every day the CBS Foreign Desk in New York would go crazy about an imminent allied air strike on the Iraqi capital.

On Jan. 13, the allies launched an air strike on the Iraqi defenses in southern Iraq. The 32nd parallel is 40 miles south of Baghdad, which makes it impossible to see

anything from our office at Al Rasheed.

On Jan. 17, Iraq was still celebrating the 2nd anniversary of The Mother Of All Battles, while in New York the U.N. refused the latest Iraqi offer concerning the flight of the U.N. inspectors spelled out by Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz. At 3:00 p.m., the Iraqi president gave a lengthy speech, which was repeated at 9:00 p.m. As the night fell, things looked tense, our team left for the press centre at the Ministry of Information down the road from Al Rasheed. As he walked out of the office, Bob Simon said: "Amjad, you are in charge."

I sat down to listen to President Hussein's speech for the second time. Then I took a pillow, put it down on the floor and lay down with my feet near the window. I could not stop myself from falling asleep while listening to the speech. I must have been tired.

Some time, later, I woke up to a very loud bang. It took me some time to realise what happened. The office was filled with shattered glass; smoke was coming from outside; the window frame was thrown on the floor, and my left leg was covered with blood. I could not stop myself from shouting. I was in a terrible state of shock.

I pulled my body out to the corridor. My neighbours were banging at the door of the room, trying to force it open. People were running in the hallway and for the first time, I thought I was going to die. Eventually, I gathered up my force, stood up and dragged myself to a room down the corridor. I shouted at the man standing there: "Help me, go to our room, 836. Get the First Aid Kit. It is in a box near the TV set."

The man ran to my room and as I dragged myself to his bed, took my socks off and my trousers down to see what had happened to my leg and where all that blood was coming from. The man ran back to the room shouting: "Can't find it, can't find it." His shouting was interrupted by another loud sound and flashes from the window. I ran back to the corridor; I asked another man to throw me a towel from his room as I left my trousers in the other room and the doors were locked by then.

I followed the others trotting down the staircase on

one leg. We got to the lobby. It was dark, water was all over the place, and people were running around aimlessly. We went one floor down to the basement. A doctor was standing there and told me to go outside to an ambulance. I said: "I am O.K., I just want some cotton to clean my wound." I was then helped out from the back door to the car park. The floor was freezing, I was bare footed, covered with a towel and the only thing I could think of was "Why the Al Rasheed?" I always told my friends back home that Al Rasheed is the safest place in Baghdad; the Americans know that the foreign media stay there, they'll never touch the place.

The ambulance had a female driver, who whizzed us confidently from the hotel to the Al Karameh teaching hospital, where we were rushed to the emergency unit. The efficiency and professionalism of the doctors there was remarkable. There is no doubt that these people have seen more miseries than tonight's and bigger wounds than the tiny one in my leg; but for me, of course, it was serious stuff.

By that time President Hussein was on the air again giving another speech. I thought: "I have to go back to the hotel, who will translate this for the crew?" A doctor came and had a look at my wound and told another guy to clean it. A third made two quick stitches in my leg. By that stage, I knew I'd be alright. Then I thought I have to call my crew; they'll be worried sick about me; the office is blown to pieces; my blood is all over the place; and I am not there. What a nightmare for Joe.

I started to ask the people at the emergency unit to call the press centre and tell my colleagues that I am still alive. Every one told me to calm down, but I started shouting. I guess I had not yet recovered from the shock. Then someone said he had tried to call, but the number was engaged and the telephone operator was blind and can't write the numbers, so they have to keep reminding him.

Another idea came to my mind; to try to go the press centre by myself. It was not very smart, I had no trousers,

and could barely walk. I called chief doctor, who told me that I was O.K. and could leave as soon as the bus from the Al Rasheed came to pick me up. By that time the emergency unit was filled with photographers, newspaper correspondents, and army officers. Then, I realised that I had become the latest casualty of the American aggression against Iraq, that I was the hottest news item of the day. They all asked me my name and what happened to me. I replied: "I don't know, I was sleeping, and woke up in hell."

The doctor in charge came and said they'd take me to a certain point, where a bus from Al Rasheed would pick me up. They put me in a wheel chair and an old man pushed me out. Minutes later, I could see that I was being pushed in the wrong direction towards the hospital building. I started to shout again, begging the poor guy to take me back. Eventually, I gave up.

I was taken to a hospital ward, where other injured people were brought. I lay down on the bed, working out a plan to go to the press centre or at least make a phone call. Another journalist came in to interview me. I tried to bargain with him: The interview in exchange for a lift to the press centre. He agreed, but of course I delivered my side of the bargain and he did not. A Sudanese ward assistant came in. I tried to bribe him to go and make the phone call. What a shame, all my money was in my trousers. A deferred payment was not as effective as the real thing. More friendly doctors came to check my injury. I became hysterical, begging them to take me out. The chief doctor said I am fine. I can leave. I screamed. No one paid attention. They said: "Calm down calm down, try to sleep."

Things began to change at the ward. A group of government officials walked into the room. Later, I was told that one of them was the minister of health. New pillow covers, clean bed sheets were rushed into the room. Another man came carrying a bunch of brand new files. For one more time, I was asked to give my name and details, which were scribbled on the cover of the new files. I felt



Saddam Hussein

lots of movement in the corridor, and the door opened.

Suddenly President Hussein entered the room, wearing his well known military uniform and his khaki overcoat. He was followed by an army of cameramen, some of whom I'd seen on TV. I was totally overwhelmed by the occasion. I could not believe my eyes and thought I was dreaming, perhaps I was sleeping in my house in Amman. Anyhow, by then the Iraqi President was talking to the person lying next to me, and surely, I thought, I was next.

Part of my job is monitoring Iraqi television. This means translating virtually every word Mr. Hussein utters, not to mention the news broadcast and the national songs shown on Iraqi TV, most of which feature the Iraqi president. The difference between TV and reality is that Mr. Hussein looks physically bigger than he does on television. He may be the president of Iraq, the defiant one, the man who confronted the thirty countries. But even if you didn't know who he was, his presence would be overwhelming. Aside from anything else, he was a few inches taller than anyone else in the room.

President Hussein walked towards me. I pulled my body to embrace him and he reciprocated. He asked: "How are you doing?" I replied with a few words, which I cannot remember now, and went on to say how I was grateful for this treatment and how good the doctors were. Mr. Hussein said that all Arab brothers are welcome in Baghdad and that it is their home, (this was one of the headlines in Al

Jumburiya newspapers the next day), and went on to ask if I needed any help. One of the doctors whom I had harassed earlier about getting out, said that I wanted to go. Mr. Hussein smiled and said that I should obey the doctors' orders. I replied that I would do whatever they told me to do.

We laughed and he walked to see the next patient. The TV cameras and the still photographers did not stop rolling for the whole happy occasion.

Half an hour later, Kareem, an employee at the Ministry of Information, walked into the room followed by our driver Majid. After a long explanation, they rushed back to the press centre to see my team and call my parents, before they could hear the news from someone else.

The next morning, I was a celebrity in Baghdad. The Iraqi minister of trade, came to shake hands with me in the lobby of the Al Rasheed, while I was exchanging greetings with all the people I know and others I had never seen before. Our producer, Joe Haideman, added two more titles to my name. Now, it reads: "Amjad Tadros, MC, chief accountant, master translator, hero of the people and friend of Saddam." I was overwhelmed by the occasion, people were staring at me in the streets and souqs of Baghdad. Some said: "We saw you on television."

I guess everyone has a moment of fame in his life. Mine lasted a few days. I am sure it was not because I survived a cruise missile crashing under my window, but because I met the all-too-famous Iraqi president.

If New York is a wonderful town, why can't the Giants get a coach?

By Arthur Spiegelman
Reuter

NEW YORK — Can you imagine a person being offered the presidency of the United States and saying no, "I'd rather be governor of Arkansas?"

Well, something similar is happening in New York.

A carload of coaches have turned down a chance to manage the New York Giants football team, a batch of editors have said no to editing the New York Daily News and whole infields of ballplayers have rejected millions of dollars to play for the New York Yankees.

Basically, people are turning their noses up at some of the city's and indeed America's great institutions.

To put it in an international context, no one is that keen to coach Britain's Liverpool football team, no one is falling over themselves to edit Germany's Bild newspaper and the thought of playing cricket for Australia is no hum.

Frank Sinatra may like to wake up in a city that never sleeps as he sings in his song New York, New York, but a lot of other people prefer a good night's rest. The Big Apple and Broadway's Great

White Way are no longer irresistible siren calls.

The message is clear — to many people, New York ain't any longer a helluva town.

The city seems to be undergoing a crisis of confidence strong enough to dent a New Yorker's hard-earned pride.

After all this is a city so conscious of its importance that it literally charges out-of-towners a \$4 admission fee at its bridges and tunnels. It even wants to tax people who live outside its borders for the honour of working in Manhattan.

If you want a symbol of what's going on just take a glance at the sports pages and read how the hapless New York Giants go from coach to coach with a beggar's bowl in hand.

The Giants, after winning two superbowl in the past decade, fired coach Ray Handley after two disastrous seasons and have been rebuffed by potential replacements.

Boston college head coach Tom Coughlin says he would rather stay in "Beantown" and Dave Wannstedt of the Dallas Cowboys says his idea of a good job is coaching in Chicago, the "city that works."

Mr. Wannstedt says New

York may be a nice place to visit but would you want to live there. He says he prefers Chicago because it is a lot like his native Pittsburgh.

Chicago, long the butt of New York jokes about it being a second-rate city, is chortling.

Baseball's New York Yankees, desperate to find a pitching staff, winned and dined ace pitcher Greg Maddux. They took him to Broadway shows and on tours of the suburbs. He signed with Atlanta for less money than New York offered.

Pitcher David Cone, who once played for the New York Mets and says he can take New York fine, signed with his hometown team in Kansas City. Outfielder Barry Bonds listened to the Yankees and signed with the San Francisco Giants.

Meanwhile, the new owner of the New York Daily News looks for a new editor amid reports that he too is being rejected by those he courts.

Could it be a trend? The New York Times says it could be at least as far as sports are concerned. The town has become just too tough to work in if you are heading up a team that loses.

Former Mets manager

Buddy Harrelson says he once failed to make a pitching change because he didn't want to be booed when he went to the mound.

New York Yankees owner George Steinbrenner hires and fires about a manager a year and regularly derides his best ballplayers and demotes his worst.

Playing in New York is compounded by radio, television and newspaper reporters whose idea of a good time is going for a team's jugular, win, lose or draw.

Some New Yorkers maintain that the sports writers are simply reflecting a new sourness that has gripped the city.

Businesses are moving out, blacks and whites are squabbling, and New York's famed neurotic wit is no longer a salve for the city's ills.

Take the case of Woody Allen, who once symbolised the sharp wit and nervous energy that the city takes loving pride in.

To many people he is a fallen idol fighting off allegations that he is a child molester.

Suddenly, like the city itself, he doesn't seem as attractive as before.

Diary

BECAUSE of its intensity and significance, the Lower House of parliament last week postponed a debate on civil service appointments until a later date. On the surface of it, the debate was about the legislative branch watching over government work to ensure, in this instance, that the executive authority does not abuse its power in appointing new civil servants other than on the basis of fairness and clean competition among applicants. Beneath the surface, however, the whole debate was started by those deputies who felt that their colleagues who have been also serving as ministers in the current cabinet are using favouritism and nepotism in appointing new civil servants as a way to get votes in the next parliamentary elections. "The just deputies are basically jealous of their colleagues who are doubling as ministers," said one insider. "There would have been the same problem if the ministers in question were mere deputies. This is the simple truth of the story." What is the government's line on all of this? "It is natural to expect ministers to fill a certain percentage (some say it is 5 per cent) of job vacancies (or is it just artificial vacancies?) with people from their families, clans or regions," came one answer. The speaker was a "non-deputy" minister. Naturally!

We bet that when Deputy Abdul Aziz Jaber registered a complaint against a citizen from the Madaba District, he didn't expect to have the ball thrown back right into his court. The deputy apparently wrote a letter to the Ministry of Interior asking them to take action against a Mohammad Kamel Al Harout for insulting the deputy during his prelections tour of the Madaba District in August. The minister's reply to the Lower House of Parliament, which was made available to the diary, said that the citizen was brought in for questioning and gave his affidavit which was totally contradictory to the deputy's claims. According to Mr. Al Harout, Mr. Jaber was driving around town, along with three other people, chanting in support of the Islamic Movement. The citizen, according to the ministry's letter, asked the deputy and his friends to stop chanting "because it might create problems considering the tense atmosphere of the elections." The parliamentary elections in Madaba that is. A heated discussion followed and the deputy took Mr. Al Harout aside and offered a sum of money and that is when, according to the ministry's letter, the citizen insulted him. The sum of money, in more legal terms, is a bribe, but no one knows whether the deputy intended to bribe Mr. Al Harout and the ministry's letter certainly does not specify the deputy's intentions. Mr. Jaber is a member of the Muslim Brotherhood parliamentary bloc.

Chief Islamic Justice Nuh Salmaan Al Qudrah has become a target of controversy, not by liberals and seculars but among Islamists themselves. Sheikh Qudrah, who was appointed only recently, initially brought attention to himself when the rumour mill carried the news that he was working on rewriting the personal statute law. Sources told the Diary that when the sheikh was asked whether he was taking advice on the law from women, his simple answer was: I don't need to ask women, this is a law that deals with Sharia (Islamic Law) and all issues are solved there. Many who took issue with this statement waited to see what other positions the Chief Islamic Justice took on other women's issues. Two weeks ago the sheikh had a field day watching a new experience. At a celebration of the Isra and Miraj (nocturnal journey of the Prophet Mohammad to heaven), which was organised by the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs, the sheikh apparently objected to women attending the occasion in the same room as men. The women in attendance, most of them anyway, as well as several sheikhs who were present, contested sheikh Qudrah's objection telling him that his demand could not be attributed to Islam under any pretext. A loud discussion followed with many of the women refusing to leave the room. But it seems that the sheikhs could not stand up long enough for the cause of the women because they left in a huff and puff and the Chief Qudh triumphantly delivered his speech without the undesirable audience. Perhaps now the government of Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ibn Shaker can understand why their latest round of appointments was seen as a step in the "right" direction by their more liberal opponents.

A businessman who, in his free time, contemplates ways to contribute to administrative reform and eradicating bureaucracy in Jordan has finally found the answer to all his questions. The revelation came to him like a flash at the most unlikely place: the graveyard. According to his story, he left the office one hour early and rushed to try and follow the funeral of Mr. Sulaiman Hadidi, a very prominent lawyer, who died last week. He reached the graveyard just in time to be one of the last to give condolences to the family members who were gathered there. "I was shocked to find that every head of department, every minister and responsible government official was at that funeral," he told the diary. He figured that if he arrived two hours after the funeral had started then all of those government officials, who were there on time, arrived at the site at least three hours before they were supposed to leave their offices. Followed by a quick calculation of the ratio of death in the Kingdom, the businessman reached a very dismal final sum of working hours that officials spend in their offices. With that formula finally worked out in his mind, he reached the conclusion that as long as the newspapers continue to carry pages and pages of obituaries every day, and as long as our officials continue to religiously read our newspapers, then the problem of bureaucracy and government delays cannot be solved.

Everyone in town knows the little ads from the foreign ministry asking the relatives of certain people to contact the ministry on an important matter. Invariably, it was to tell the relatives that their beloved had died on foreign land. Despite repeated criticism of this practice and some suggestions that the ministry try to contact the relatives by phone or better still personally, the ministry still does its spiel in the same way. Recently one such ad ran in the local Arabic papers asking the relatives of a Mr. Gassan Qandalaft to contact the ministry. In the same paper and on a different page the family of Mr. Qandalaft ran an obituary of the deceased and announced that friends can come to condole the family whose body had already been brought back. Not only does the ministry continue to be insensitive to running those deadly ads, it is also almost always late in notifying the family of the tragic news. Perhaps the ministry should continue to be fallaciously named the "foreign..." rather than "...of foreign affairs."

Remembrance

Albert Hourani

THE DEATH of Albert Hourani on Jan. 17 is an immense impoverishment of the community of Middle Eastern studies in Europe and North America. Nobody else, since George Antonius has written with such compelling assurance about the problems of the Arab World and their international significance.

His parents had migrated from Lebanon to Manchester before World War II and Albert was educated at an English public school and at Magdalen College, Oxford. In 1939 he was drawn by Arnold Toynbee into the organisation which was to become the Foreign Office Research Department, moving later in the war from there to Cairo and Jerusalem at a time when the issue of Palestine was becoming Britain's major regional preoccupation. Inevitably he was recruited by Musa Alami, who had taken command of the Arab case to world opinion. When the

Anglo-American Committee on Palestine visited Jerusalem in 1946 it was Hourani who was chosen to state the Arab case, which he did with impressive logic and eloquence.

Returning to Oxford in 1948, he began an academic career which lasted effectively until his death, based for most of that time at St. Antony's College. He made numerous visits to the United States and could almost certainly have had a prestigious academic position there, but preferred to stay in Oxford.

He wrote extensively, largely on the cultural relationship of Arab and Western societies and, being himself a Catholic, with a constant awareness of the central significance of Islam and Christianity. His quiet and authoritative presence will be long remembered in the circles where Arab and Islamic affairs are studied — Middle East International.

Harold Beeley

Twins

By Jean-Claude Elias

Negative! This story's title has got nothing to do with the box office hit movie starring Arnold Schwarzenegger and Danny DeVito. Or has it?

Those who have read last week's column might remember that it was about the compatibility between different computers and the necessity for the operators to learn a set of commands called the operating system (OS) before being able to actually use, control and then get some benefit from a computer. Any person who has, one way or another, approached, heard about or used a small computer knows that there are two well established standards, the so-called IBM (actually the MS-DOS. Microsoft Disk Operation System) and its compatibles on one side, and the Apple-Macintosh on the other.

Any debate to find out which of the IBM or the Mac is "best" would be a total waste of time, for both worlds are basically different and at the same time very close to one another. At the root, they both are personal computers, designed to do the same tasks, and more or less fall in the same price category.

Notwithstanding some details, their size, power consumption, external design, data storage capability and processing power are similar and belong to the same class.

To lead to the same results, however, the Mac and the IBM take different roads. From the very beginning, the first was designed with the idea of making all operations as easy and intuitive as possible for the user. The term "user-friendly" was used for the first time for computers. Most functions and commands could be accessed by moving the famous mouse across a set of drawings on the screen and clicking one of its buttons for selection. This concept was later on adopted on the IBM, with the advent of the MS-Windows software. A lot of typing time was saved for people who were not typists. The Mac was also given powerful graphics and sound capabilities. The IBM standard was recently able to catch up with the Mac's graphics but the sound part is still superior on the Macintosh. Excellent Arabisation is also one of the Mac's strong points.

Some computer professionals turned their back on the Macintosh saying that it was designed for children or

chip talk



beginners, but of course it was not. For it is possible to use the Mac through the "mouse and menu" easy system or professionally for programming and other advanced tasks. The IBM on the other hand required operators to learn a lot of commands and concepts and type them without any mistake, in order to work.

Those who preferred the IBM argued that it was less expensive than its Mac brother, and that a wider choice of programmes were available for it. While both reasons are valid, users tend to go to the MS-DOS/IBM system because they can choose from a huge number of manufacturers supplying it, and therefore don't find themselves "prisoners" of just one brand. Moreover in countries where copyright laws are not yet properly enforced, pirating (illegal copying) of MS-DOS programmes is widespread, easy and cheap.

The good news is that both brothers are slowly but surely getting closer to one another. The MS-Windows system gives IBM users the Mac feel and famous MS-DOS programmes like dBase III (data base) are now available on the Mac. There has also been a question of joint ventures and cooperation projects between companies from both worlds who have recognised that the two systems present different advantages and that combining them would be in everybody's interest.

Currently, worldwide and by number of units in use, the IBM/MS-DOS standard is, and by far, the leading one. But such a comparison should be weighted by the fact that, as said before, the IBM/DOS is manufactured by hundreds of companies while the Mac is made by Apple only. The one point to keep in mind is that both systems belong to the same family of personal computers. Will they become true twins one day?

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Thursday, Jan. 28

1859 — Britain's parliament declares that James II has abdicated; Germany's Baron Melas devastates the Palatinate.

1946 — East India Company troops defeat Sikhs at Alwal in India.

1871 — Paris surrenders to Germany in Franco-Prussian War.

1965 — British relief force reaches Khartoum, and the Sudan is evacuated.

1959 — U.S. control in Cuba is ended.

1932 — Japanese troops occupy Shanghai in China.

1945 — First U.S. truck convoy travels reopened Burma Road in World War II.

1961 — Ruanda provisional government proclaims republic.

1962 — U.S. unmanned spacecraft, Ranger III, fails to hit moon and passes it at distance of 22,000 miles.

1964 — Riots break out in Salisbury, southern Rhodesia.

1976 — U.S. Senate approves 200-mile fishing limit off American coasts.

1980 — Islamic foreign ministers meeting in Pakistan pass resolution condemning Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan.

1983 — Labour group Solidarity's underground leaders call on Poland's factory workers to prepare for nationwide general strike as "the only way to break down the existing dictatorship."

1984 — Dozens of Sikh militants are arrested in India's troubled Punjab state after terrorists kill three people and wound 31 others in grenade attacks.

1986 — Space shuttle Challenger explodes moments after liftoff from Cape Canaveral, Florida, killing all seven crew members.

1990 — Life in Azerbaijan capital of Baku is reportedly normalised as Armenian and Azerbaijani separatists withdraw from border regions.

1991 — Soviet troops seize and shut down two Lithuanian customs posts.

1992 — Leadership of National Liberation Front that won Algeria's independence and ruled for three decades resigns.

Friday, Jan. 29

1676 — Theodore III becomes tsar of Russia on death of his father Alexis.

1801 — France and Spain issue ultimatum to Portugal to break allegiance to Britain.

1889 — Crown Prince Archduke Rudolf of Austria-Hungary kills his mistress and himself at hunting lodge in

Mayerling.

1916 — Germans stage first Zeppelin raid on Paris, France, in World War I.

1919 — Czechoslovak forces defeat Poles at Galicia, Poland.

1947 — United States abandons its mediation role in China.

1949 — Britain grants de facto recognition to Israel.

1950 — First series of riots occur in Johannesburg, provoked by South Africa's racial policy.

1963 — Britain is refused entry into European Common Market by France's veto.

1964 — Panama complains to Organisation of American States about alleged U.S. aggression.

1973 — United States, Soviet Union and 17 other nations agree to meet in Vienna to try reaching accord on cutting strength of armed forces in Europe.

1976 — Soviet Union makes it known that it is willing to accept political settlement in strife-torn Angola.

1989 — Syrian and Iranian foreign ministers reach agreement on peace formula to end fighting between their Shiites surrogates in Lebanon.

1990 — Ousted east German Communist Party leader Erich Honecker arrested and ordered to stand trial in March for high treason.

1991 — South African political rivals Mengosuthu Buthelezi and Nelson Mandela meet for first time in 30 years and call jointly for ceasefire in feud between ANC and Inkatha loyalists.

1992 — Russian President Boris Yeltsin unveils his nuclear weapons reduction plan.

Saturday, Jan. 30

1522 — Lubeck declares war on Denmark and lays waste to Bornholm.

1641 — Portuguese surrender Malacca in Malaya to the Dutch.

1648 — Peace between Spain and the Netherlands is signed at Munster.

1788 — Charles Edward Stuart, young pretender to British throne, dies in Rome.

1902 — Britain signs treaty with Japan providing for independence of China and Korea.

1933 — Adolf Hitler is named chancellor of Germany.

1943 — Soviets destroy German army southwest of Stalingrad in World War II.

1948 — Mahatma Gandhi is assassinated by a Hindu in New Delhi, India.

1957 — United Nations calls on South Africa to reconsider its apartheid policy.

1962 — U.N. General Assembly adopts Asian-African resolution calling on Portugal to halt repressive measures against Angola.

1964 — South Vietnamese General Nguyen Khanh seizes power in coup in Saigon.

1970 — Two students are killed and more than 200 wounded as demonstrators storm presidential palace in Philippine capital of Manila.

1972 — British troops kill 13 civilians during rioting in Londonderry, Northern Ireland.

1979 — White Rhodesians approve new constitution to eventually give blacks control of the nation.

1984 — Libya's leader Muammar Qadhafi, in interview with French radio network, warns there could be military escalation in Chad because of France's new defence line in that north-central African nation.

1986 — President Ferdinand Marcos of the Philippines pledges to relinquish power peacefully if he loses to Corason Aquino in the Feb. 7 election.

1989 — United States closes its embassy in besieged Afghan capital of Kabul.

1990 — Communist Party loses majority in Czechoslovak parliament, which it dominated for four decades.

1991 — Iraqi forces attack allied positions in Saudi Arabia near Kuwaiti border, killing eight to ten U.S. Marines and holding abandoned coastal city of Khafji for a time.

1992 — U.S. military announces it will halt or cut back operations at 83 additional military sites in Europe.

Monday, Feb. 1

1587 — England's Queen Elizabeth I signs warrant for execution of Mary Queen of Scots.

1702 — Prince Eugene of Savoy raids Cremona, Italy.

1775 — Peasants in Bohemia revolt against servitude.

1881 — First signs of nationalist movement appear in Egypt as military officers stage uprising.

1896 — Crete, inspired by Greece, begins revolution against Turkey.

1899 — U.S. flag is raised over Pacific island of Guam, formerly under Spanish control.

1908 — Portugal's King Carlos I and crown prince are murdered in Lisbon, and Manuel II becomes king.

1924 — Britain recognises Communist government of Soviet Union.

1935 — Anglo-German conference is held in London to discuss Germany's rearmament; Italy sends troops to

east Africa.

1946 — Trygve Lie, Norwegian Socialist, is elected United Nations secretary-general; Hungarian Republic is proclaimed.

1956 — South Africa requests Soviet Union to withdraw all consulates.

1959 — Swiss referendum rejects female suffrage in federal elections.

1972 — British embassy in Dublin is bombed as anti-British demonstrations sweep Ireland.

1990 — Romanian National Salvation Front agrees to a power-sharing arrangement until national elections can be held.

1991 — South African President F.W. de Klerk calls for repeal of Group Areas Act and Land Acts and modification of Population Registration Act in preparation for its abolition.

1992 — President George Bush and Russian President Boris Yeltsin sign Camp David declaration stating Russia and United States do not regard themselves as potential adversaries.

Tuesday, Feb. 2

1808 — French force occupies Rome after Pope Pius VII refuses to recognise Kingdom of Naples and join alliance against Britain.

1872 — Holland sells trading posts on African gold coast to Britain.

1878 — Greece declares war on Turkey.

1905 — Insurrection breaks out in Welle district of Belgian Congo.

1919 — Monarchy is proclaimed in Portugal.

1924 — Caliphate is abolished by Turkey's National Assembly.

1953 — United States announces that it no longer will block Chinese nationalist raids against China mainland.

1974 — Communists outside Phnom Penh bombard Cambodian capital, and officials say 17 people are killed.

1975 — Ethiopia's military government orders bombers, armoured units and troops into operations against guerrillas in Eritrea province.

1977 — West German government approves delivery of \$625 million worth of submarines, tanks and guided missiles to Indonesia and Turkey.

1988 — Human rights group says it has documented "systematic campaign" of kidnapping, torture and murder of civilians by Nicaragua's leftist Sandinista government.

1990 — South African President F.W. de Klerk lifts ban on African National Congress.

By The Associated Press

Censorship

By E. Yaghi

Now the people say I'd never put such horrors into print
If I wasn't too conceited to accept a friendly hint,
And my dearest friends are certain that I'd profit in the end.

If I'd always show my copy to a literary friend.
(My Literary Friend by Henry Lawson)

At least once in their careers, most writers who are underpaid, overworked and seldom appreciated, face the threat of censorship. Censorship might be implemented because the writer treaded in the "no-write zone" of sensitive forbidden political issues or it might be enforced by the sharp and scrutinising eyes of the ever alert eagle editor, but a more common kind of censorship comes from none of these sources, for it is suggested (sometimes not very tactfully) or even demanded by friends, acquaintances and well-wishers of the writer to be.

Now on various occasions, Sir Author has been confronted with such purging comments as, "I don't agree at all with your treatment of the topic you last wrote about. I thought it despicable. Why don't you stick to your usual crummy and mundane articles instead?"

"Thank you for this moment of truth," Author would moan. "I didn't know my writing was that disgusting!"

Another comment was: "Your articles are too long. Try to make them shorter!"

But how can any writer bear to delete some of his precious words, the creation of his own "mega" brain?

Anyway, Author would try to control his flow of words and write less lengthy pieces, whereas his editor would likely respond with, "well, it's a bit short, isn't it? What's wrong, having a problem with writer's block?"

Once, poor Author showed his pride and joy to an esteemed friend who scoffed: "Your beginning is all wrong. You use too much rhetoric and you are redundant! Why don't you ask a professional for help?"

So he heeded this advice and took his wilting masterpiece to a professional critic (in other words, a faultfinder) known in literary circles as a word doctor who screamed when he saw it. "Oh my God!" and slapped his forehead in disbelief. "What a monstrosity! What a horror! It's beyond redemption! But wait a minute, perhaps with a lot of changes, I can be of some help. Sit down, you look sick! What's wrong, haven't been getting enough sleep lately?"

Sir Author collapsed on the nearest chair, looking like all the blood had just drained out of his face. He stared disbelievingly as the "pro" doctored up his ailing masterpiece with a bright red pen. He scribbled scarlet advice into the margins until not a space was left and underlined words and lettered their replacements above them. He even had the nerve to question, "what the heck does this mean?"

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

By Mohammad A. Shuqair

PARTS OF SPEECH...

HOWLERS

VERB: — A word that enables a sentence to get somewhere.

— A passive verb is when the subject is the sufferer, as in "I am loved."

— Active verb. One that shows action.

NOUN: (Abstract) — Something you can't see when you are looking at it.

ADJECTIVE: An adjective with a tail on it.

ADVERB: A word hanging down from a verb.

CONJUNCTION: A place where two railway lines meet.

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

At A Restaurant

— Do you know a good restaurant?

Taraf mat'am kway'yes?

Ayez akol ta'am mahalli.

— Oriental

Sharki

— Western-style

Gharbi

— I'm looking for a French restaurant.

Badawwir ala mat'am Faransawi.

— Italian

Italiani.

— Indian

Hindi.

— I want to have lunch soon.

Ayez el-ghada fil-hal.

— I want to have supper at ten.

Ayez el-asha el-sa'a ashra.

— Is it expensive?

Howa ghali?

— How much (roughly) for two people?

Bikam (takriban) li-shakhsayn?

— I'd like a table for three, please.

Ayez tawla lilatala, min-fadlak.

— Waiter! Could I have the menu, please?

Ya garson! Momken ashooof ka'imet el-ta'am?

— What do you recommend?

Eli hiya ahsan at'hak indokum?

— I'd like something light.

Ayez haja khafifa.

— Is it fresh? Hot?

Howa taza? Har?

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

"Woman's world"

1. What is done with a crinoline?
2. Apart from a dance, what is a bolero?
3. What is a poncho?
4. What do the initials S.R.N. denote?
5. In which year was margarine invented?
6. What flavour has a chive?
7. What is paprika?
8. What, in cooking terms, is a griddle?
9. For what purpose are scauteurs used?
10. What is pumpernickel?

JOKES

★ Only an embittered and vengeful mind would have thought up anything like that. She was angry enough to do it. She wrapped the engagement ring very carefully in wads of wadding, tucked it in the box, and addressed it to the one she had severed relations with.

With hands as deft as a surgeon, he at last finished removing, exchanging and replacing words, phrases, clauses and even complete sentences and huffed a sigh of mollified relief as he shoved the by now wrinkled and worn manuscript at Author. "Here, go home, read the corrections thoroughly and write your story all over again. I guarantee instant success and your name will become a by-word in literary circles!"

Consequently, Author trudged home appearing as if he'd lost his best friend in the whole world, for his own version of his story had just died. As soon as he entered his house, he tossed his doctored article on the dusty dining room table and headed for the kitchen where he desperately brewed a strong, thick black cup of coffee to drown his sorrows in. Feeling minutely better, he dejectedly picked up his piece determined to improve his sagging talents. Under the light of a fading candle he rewrote his story. He worked until the late hours of the night and when his candle finally burned itself out he victoriously put down his quilled pen and went to sleep with a satisfied smile on his face.

The next day he heard birds singing in the trees, the sun was bright and cheerful and he jumped out of bed with confidence. He was so excited about what he had written.

He had followed the "pro's" orders to the letter and now thanks to expert advice, he knew he really had something great to show his editor, his readers, his esteemed friend and most important, the word doctor. He quickly dressed and gulped down something resembling breakfast and rushed to his publisher muttering to himself: "I've finally done it! I've written the greatest masterpiece of my life. I'll become famous and be an overnight success!"

He bounced up the stairs of his publishing company with a rare smile. He flung his classic at the editor who seemed rather taken aback by such a rash display of confidence. And Author didn't even wait for his editor's or publisher's opinion, so assured was he of his literary excellence. A week later, when his piece came out in print, he beamed in conceited jubilation to his friends, waiting for deserved words of praise to gush forth.

But all he got was, "It should have been longer."

Or, "It should have been shorter!"

Or, "You could have said it better in a different way."

But the last and final blow was when his esteemed friend exclaimed, "I told you to get the literary advice of an expert! If you had, this horror would never have been put into print in the first place!"

Frustrated to the maximum, Author began to pull out the rest of what hair he had left, and bang his head against the wall. When his nerves finally calmed down some, he gasped: "It's the hardest thing in the world to please others. Especially confusing is when their advice leads to the river of no return."

Well, better luck next time, Author!

YOUR DREAMS INTERPRETED

DOCTOR: He's a good man or woman to have in your dream because he or she forecasts an improvement in all departments of your life.

ENGINEER: Whether civil, electrical, mechanical, etc. you have been dreaming, you'll have happy happenings aplenty if your dream involved engineering works or engineers at work.

KING: Happiness, prestige, and prosperity are forecast in a dream of being, seeing or meeting royalty, unless the dream had some embarrassing or unpleasant element in it, in which case it is a warning that you could be victimised by underhanded gossip, so keep your private affairs to yourself.

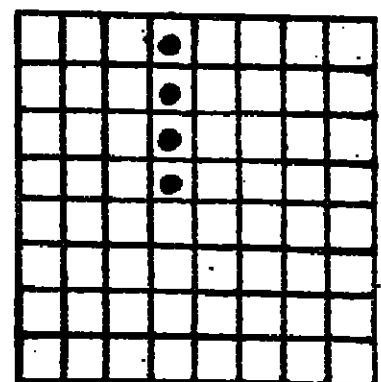
OFFICER: If your dream featured a police officer, it forecasts an embarrassment due to the financial carelessness of a friend or relation; however, a dream featuring an officer of any of the armed services signifies security and protection.

TEACHER: A dream of being a teacher is telling you that if you want to avoid unpleasant repercussions, you must control your tendency to "hunt with the hounds and run with the hare."

PUZZLES

(1) Which number gives the same result when it is added to 4 as when it is multiplied by 4?

2. A gardener left to his four sons a square garden containing four trees-as illustrated in the accompanying diagram. By the terms of his will, each son was to have the same area of land, of the same shape, and each piece containing one tree. Can you work out the best way of parcelling out the land to the four sons?



New films promise to deliver lofty stories, low budgets

By John Horn
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The first of 1993's movies — a collection of predictable sequels, costly star vehicles and low-budget offerings — arrived with a most unusual pairing: The Walt Disney Co. and cannibalism.

Disney this month released *Alive*, an account of airplane crash survivors who must either feed on dead passengers or perish in the Andes Mountains. In a rare though not unprecedented move, Disney and Paramount Pictures, normally bitter rivals, co-produced the film. Both studios held competing rights to the story, but the strange union was also motivated by concerns over production costs and its commercially risky theme.

Beyond *Alive*, the upcoming film year will feature calculated fare from the likes of Tom Cruise, Eddie Murphy, Harrison Ford and Sylvester Stallone, and Wayne's World and Hot Shots sequels.

And penny-pinching will be evident throughout, as *Alive* proves.

The domestic rights to the movie were awarded to Disney in a coin toss: Paramount

will claim the international market.

Disney is trying to sell *Alive* as a heroic saga. Cannibalism, said Disney executive Dick Cook, "is not really what it's about. The feeling of the movie is much more spiritual than that."

Whatever the interpretation, *Alive* as a business proposition reveals much about the entertainment industry, where revenues are slumping and international markets no longer are growing.

Like many other movies to be released this year, the modestly budgeted *Alive* (made for about \$25 million) represents an alternative to soaring production and marketing costs of about \$40 million a movie.

Universal Pictures, for example, says its 1993 releases will be on average 25 per cent cheaper than its 1992 films, although its lineup includes Steven Spielberg's \$60 million dinosaur story *Jurassic Park* (June 11).

"Obviously, if we're making *Jurassic*, you spend," said Tom Pollock, chairman of the MCA Motion Picture Group, Universal's parent.

The studio's most profitable films last year, Mr. Pollock said, were not the extra-

vagant *Far And Away* or Robert Redford in *Sneakers*. Rather, they were *Fried Green Tomatoes*, bought for about \$4 million, and *Beethoven*, produced for less than \$20 million.

The challenge is to save money and not skimp on quality, he said.

"The audience will only go to see good film, period," Mr. Pollock said. "The audience doesn't care what the cost of the movie is. What the audience cares about is, 'is it good?'"

Among Universal's budget offerings are John Goodman in *Matinee* (Jan. 29) and the horror film *Army Of Darkness* (Feb. 12).

Of all the studios, Sony Pictures probably will release the most titles. Counting the company's Tristar and Columbia Pictures and the art divisions Sony Classics and TriStar Releasing, Sony will unveil about 40 films.

One of the highlights will be Anthony Hopkins and Emma Thompson in *The Remains Of The Day* (Nov. 5), from Merchant Ivory Productions, makers of *Howards End* and *A Room With A View*. The film probably will cost about \$12 million and be a favourite for awards.

Without question, the

year's cheapest release is Columbia's *El Mariachi* (Feb. 26). The border-town drama was made by writer-director Richard Rodriguez for an astonishing \$7,000.

"You're trying to see people be sensible and prudent about their business," Jonathan Dolgen, president of Sony's motion picture group, said in describing Sony's mix of 30 major releases and a dozen or so lower-priced features.

Among pricey works, the studio is banking on *The Last Action Hero* with Arnold Schwarzenegger (June 18), Martin Scorsese's *The Age Of Innocence* (fall) and Sylvester Stallone's \$75 million drama *Cliffhanger* (May 28).

Even though former television programmer Brandon Tartikoff has left Paramount, the studio's slate has his boob-tube hand prints all over it.

After the success of last year's *Wayne's World*, another lowbrow movie based on a Saturday Night Live script is due: *The Coneheads* (July 23).

"The Addams Family 2" (Nov. 19) and *Wayne's World 2* (Dec. 10) are among the Paramount sequels. A *Hill Street Blues* movie was

axed, however.

The big Paramount films are Tom Cruise in the adaptation *The Firm* (July 2) and Sharon Stone in (what else?) a sexy thriller called *Sliver* (May 21).

Among the lower-budget Paramount releases: Johnny Depp in *What's Eating Gilbert Grape?*, an offbeat, independently produced story about a strange family from *My Life As A Dog* director Lasse Hallstrom.

"I could not describe it in one sentence. It took 1 hour to explain to Paramount," said Gilbert Grape co-producer David Matalon, who said studios no longer ignore unusual (and inexpensive) options. "Now it's easier for us to sell the oddball."

20th Century Fox will try to duplicate the successful spoof *Hot Shots with Hot Shots 2* (May 21).

Besides *Alive*, Disney will release director Tim Burton's *The Nightmare Before Christmas* (at Christmastime) and the video game-inspired *Super Mario Brothers* (May 18).

Of course, there will be a wealth of expensive star vehicles.

They include 20th Century Fox's *Rising Sun* (May), from



Eddie Murphy (left) in *Beverly Hills Cop II*

Michael Crichton's novel and starring Sean Connery; Paramount's \$65 million *Beverly Hills Cop 3* (fall, maybe) with Eddie Murphy; and Harrison Ford in Warner Bros.' *The Fugitive* (August).

The struggling Orion and

MGM Studios will try to rebound, with Orion banking on *Married To It* (March) with Beau Bridges, and MGM hopeful about *Son Of The Pink Panther* (May).

Among the independent studios, Fine Line Features

will release *The Last Days Of Chez Nous* (Feb. 24 in limited markets). Even Cowgirls Get The Blues (July 23) and *Short Cuts* (Sept. 24), directed by Robert Altman, who's coming off his critical and box-office success. *The Player*.

By Jon Pareles

NEW YORK — There was no reason to think that popular music would survive the '80s with a shred of dignity or intelligence.

Increasingly distant from its roots, swallowed by ever-expanding media conglomerates, upstaged by video imagery and marketed with unremitting repetition, rock could easily have become as glittery, superficial and disposable as any other consumer products.

But despite — and sometimes because of — those changes, as 1993 begins, it is clear that the early 1980s have brought better popular music than anyone might have expected.

Rock of the 1980s is shaping up as a polymorphous mess — dozens of categories and subgenres and recombinations — with a core of genuine innovation and surprising seriousness.

The best 1990s rock (a

term I'll use to encompass hip-hop dance music and the rest of the mess) often rejects prettiness, but it has the severe beauty of passion inventing its own structures. It also has the kind of visceral kick that puts bodies in motion and demands a reaction, the way rock should.

Bands like Nirvana, Arrested Development, My Bloody Valentine and Nine Inch Nails defy the aesthetics of the baby boomers who have dominated rock for a generation.

The standard lineup for a rock band — guitars, bass, drums, maybe keyboard — is now up for grabs, challenged by the virtual realities of computerized sounds and subverted by guitar bands that play distortion instead of harmony.

True to the music's punk and hip-hop heritage, nothing else can be taken for granted, either: not the song forms of Tin Pan Alley or even Motown, not seductive

'90s rock: A mess, but not bad

sounds, not clarity.

For better and worse, the music is rootless; even the current popularity of country music — boomers' last chance to enjoy melodies and straightforward storytelling — looks back only as far as the Eagles and Linda Ronstadt, relying more on synthesizers than on fiddle.

To some listeners, all those changes mean that rock has lost touch with eternal verities derived from the blues, gospel and honky-tonk. Rock's job, however, is not to preserve continuity with the past but to empathize with the present; it's supposed to shake things up, to blast away evasions and find a direct expression of the moment. Forward-looking 1990s rock does that, restoring an honesty and fervor that too many 1980s rock

glossed over.

Instead of trying to project sincerity, new 1980s rock assumes a world of artifice, then chooses carefully among postures, from the slackers of collegiate rock to the sexual supermen of dancehall reggae.

It's hyperspecialized, with some dance music that's little more than a rhythm track and some songs that dissolve into pure atmosphere; it usually prefers a good beat to a good tune, sometimes to any tune at all.

The music is guarded rather than open, noisy rather than lucid, angry and cynical rather than hopeful or moralistic; it uses abrasion, diversionary tactics and irony to keep outsiders from getting too close.

Yet a startling frankness, only occasionally exploited

for simple shock value, often hides within the mayhem and misdirection, as singers and rappers mull over community, sexuality, private fears and public interests, getting into details with rap, venturing obliquely into unexpected areas with rock. It's music for an era of too much information and too little truthfulness.

The glossy, meticulously calibrated images of 1980s pop stars have gone out of style, as if audiences suddenly grew tired of performers so sharply focused that there was nothing left to imagine or interpret.

New groups, weaned on camcorders and computer icons, are more cunning about video and media spectacle than previous generations were, and more jaded and self-conscious after a decade

of MTV; they hide behind obscure lighting, smoke, odd camera angles.

The best use video not just to sell themselves, but to stir up ideas. Visually and aurally, in 1990s rock messages arrive in video-age fragments and jump cuts though performers still think they can say something important.

To stare down the demons of drug addiction, Alice in Chains reworks 1990s hard rock with irregular metres and bleak dissonances on its album *Dirt*. Nine Inch Nails' frantic, brutal songs on *Broken* simultaneously lash out at tormentors and torture themselves.

The pendulum is swinging away from plushness and prettiness, inviting projects like P.J. Harvey's *Dry*, an album recorded for \$5,000. On it, Polly Jean Harvey's

arrangements swerve within seconds from musing to assault.

Dry is only one among scores of cheaply made, substantial albums that would sound far worse if they were made more "professionally." Both punk and hip-hop brought a do-it-yourself attitude to rock, and a large audience is happy with unvarnished productions, even if that just means Eric Clapton's *Unplugged*.

Music from the margins has grown more important as the popular music audience has fragmented by age, geography, class and inclination.

Entertainment moguls can still score blockbusters with heavily marketed movie tie-ins and, away from the coasts, with good-hearted Garth Brooks. But they bemoan the absence of across-the-board hit-makers like the Beatles in the 1960s or Michael Jackson in the 1980s.

The advance of 1990s rock

arrive with drawbacks. Careers are short, audiences flighty; cults sometimes abandon their favourites as soon as the rest of the world catches on. As the buying public subdivides, the 10-million-selling albums that supported chancier releases are learning to be happy with American sales of 4 or 5 million.

Will the current burst of creativity last? Good things rarely do. The music business has learned to ferret out formulas and reduplicate them until long after their usefulness has faded; innovations will be annealed into genres and record-company divisions and, eventually, radio formats.

Any week now, the U.S. imitators of the 1980s will have been replaced by the Pearl Jam imitators of the 1990s. The time to plunge into the mess is now, before anyone has figured out exactly what's going on — New York Times.

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, Jan. 28

9:30 Uncle Buck

Thea tries to be a Model. Will she succeed?

9:10 The Human Factor

Wrongful Life

What are the limits of the doctor's responsibility and how far should the doctor go in telling the patient all the details?

0:00 News In English

0:20 Movie Of The Week

Amazing Grace Of Chuck

Starring: Jamie-Lee Curtis

A young boy's protest turns into a nationwide campaign. Athletes from all over the world respond. He even rouses the president's interest.

Friday, Jan. 29

30 Coach

10 E.N.G.

15 Of Fire

People have the right to know and see the truth and Michael believes in letting the picture tell the story and the truth.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Columbo

Candidate For Crime

There are all sorts of candidates in tonight's story on Columbo. A man starts as a candidate for the Senate and something else develops.

Saturday, Jan. 30

8:30 America's Funniest Home Videos

9:00 Perspective

9:30 Science Workshop

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film

Cry In The Wild

The taking of Peggy Ann

Starring: David Morse

A true story about the kidnapping of a young school girl, Peggy Ann, in 1955.

Sunday, Jan. 31

8:30 Who's The Boss

You Can Go Home Again

Samantha comes home from

university and pretends to be sick to get spoiled by the family.

9:10 Documentary — National Geographic

The Life And Legend of Jane Goodall

The life and legend of Dr. Jane Goodall who spent a lifetime in Tanzanian forests studying and observing the chimpanzee.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Law And Order

Intolerance

A bright young student of Chinese origin is murdered and the D.A. accuses a family with a history of intolerance towards Chinese-Americans.

Monday, Feb. 1

8:30 Step By Step

Into The Woods

The family goes on a vacation but new problems arise.

9:10 Sherlock Holmes

The Creeping Man

10:00 News In English

10:20 Jordan Weekly

10:40 Vietnam

Tuesday, Feb. 2

8:30 Perfect Strangers

Strangers Car Tunes

9:10 The Dirtwater Dynasty

10:00 News In English

10:20 Big Man

Boomerang

A gang steals a sophisticated weapon but Jack uncovers this case and returns the weapon.

Wednesday, Feb. 3

8:30 Saved By The Bell

9:00 One Step Ahead

A local programme presented by Nisreen Al Tal and directed by M. Hamoud.

9:30 Classic Cars

Wheels Of Gold

Motives vary at classic car auctions. With a passion, investors, dealers and amateur collectors all come for the same reason: to acquire the car of their dreams.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Body Line

Rome out as fashion capital

By Daniela Petroff

The Associated Press
ROME — All roads may lead to Rome, but where fashion is concerned, it is a dead end street.

Long gone are the go-go days of the 1960s when the rich and famous came to be wine, dined and clothed in best "dolce vita" style.

The "Roman Holiday," as lived by a bright-eyed princess, whose wonderment at life in the eternal city earned the late Audrey Hepburn an Oscar, is over.

Lights go out at eleven on the Via Veneto these days, grand hotels have signs up in the lobby telling tour groups when their bus will leave, and breaking with tradition, Gucci has joined the January sales.

The limelight has dimmed on the runway too, relegating the fame of Italian couture and names like Fabiani, Biki and Sorelle Fontana, who dressed Miss Hepburn in Roman Holiday, to a glorious past.

The biggest blow came a few years ago when Italy's No. 1 couture designer, Valentino, took his collection to Paris.

"What's the point of putting on a show for two-bit actresses and has-been contessas," Giancarlo Giammetti, Valentino's right hand man, said at the time, referring to the absence of jet set names and the international press at the semi-annual Rome collections.

Valentino still maintains his headquarters in Rome, where he has set up a cultural centre whose proceeds go to AIDS victims.

Valentino is not the only



A model shows a dress designed by Marella Ferrera during a recent spring/summer 1993 collection show in Rome (AFP photo).

designer to have abandoned Rome. Gianfranco Ferré also shows in Paris, while Roberto Capucci, Roman couturier par excellence, absent from the capital's runway for the past five years, has recently shown in Florence, and Ber-

lin. In the spring his clothes will be part of a Paris exhibit dedicated to women.

"Rome has fallen apart, and doesn't seem to be able to pick up the pieces," the designer said in a recent interview in the Rome daily *Il*

Messaggero, in which he pointed out that Rome — unlike Paris — does not have a permanent fashion centre.

The most recent high fashion shows for spring-summer 1993, which ended in Rome Thursday, produced little hope for the future.

Not that the clothes weren't well made and elegant — in fact the quality seemed to be up from a few seasons ago — but there was nothing new on or off the runway.

Roman dowagers in basic black and pearls applauded their favourite designers from Barocco to Balestra, from Laug to Lancetti with enthusiasm. But their loyalty won't ring bells on the cash register.

The young designers, many of whom are noblemen themselves, like Roman Prince Alessandro Torlonia, have surrounded themselves with blue-blooded fans who show their support in the purchase of wedding and ball gowns.

In order to make their clothes more attractive, the Rome designers have promised to hold prices down, meaning a custom-made suit will cost around \$5,000, while ball gowns carry a starting price of \$10,000.

The style proposed by the Italian couture designers is a mixture between the sophisticated and the ethnic. Sarong skirts and pajama pants in gay silk prints share the runway with trim suits and demurely ruffled party dresses.

The garden party look completed by the ever-present bag, gloves and wide brimmed hat is reminiscent of the outfits from the film *Breakfast At Tiffany's*, which turned Miss Hepburn's elegance into a legend.

The development of organ transplants

By Patrick Olivier

Thanks to the discovery of cyclosporin, which makes it possible to control rejection, there has been an increase in organ transplants. Today, new methods creating tissue tolerance represent a tremendous leap forward for grafts and make it possible to envisage using animal organs.

PARIS — It all began with a veritable national drama. After days and days of desperate hope and anguished waiting, Marius Renard, a child of seven, the first person to receive a transplant in France, suddenly died. There was tremendous disappointment. The organ had been rejected. So many people had been waiting for the success of this kidney transplant, for this child of course, but also for so many other sick people who were doomed. That was

say the moment when chance went permanently over to the side of the surgeons and the receivers, only really came a dozen or so years ago, when a miracle drug was discovered by chance. This was cyclosporin. The latter contained a substance making it possible to overcome a major obstacle to grafts, for good: The phenomenon of rejection. From then on, the success of a transplant only depended on the skill of the surgeons and the organs available.

To date, more than 250,000 kidney transplants have been carried out in the world. 30 specialised centres have been created in France in the last ten years. The success rate of kidney transplants is 80 per cent and the longest transplant patient has lived with somebody else's kidney for more than 29 years.

Transplants and grafts have not only become common practice, but they have

also extended to all the essential organs. Kidney transplants, together with heart transplants are the most widespread, but lungs and the pancreas are also grafted. The liver, a complex organ, can be grafted too.

Medicine has made such great strides in the area of organ transplants that soon it will no longer be necessary to administer anti-rejection drugs. New methods are being considered.

New methods

By making anti-rejection substances unnecessary, these new methods have the enormous advantage of cancelling any harmful side effects (such as neurological, kidney or diabetic complications) and of maintaining the organism's defence mechanisms.

Two new directions are thus being taken today, each of which aims to familiarise the receiver's organism with

that of the donor. This is the so-called "tolerance induction" principle through which an attempt is made to initiate reciprocal tolerance between the two organisms.

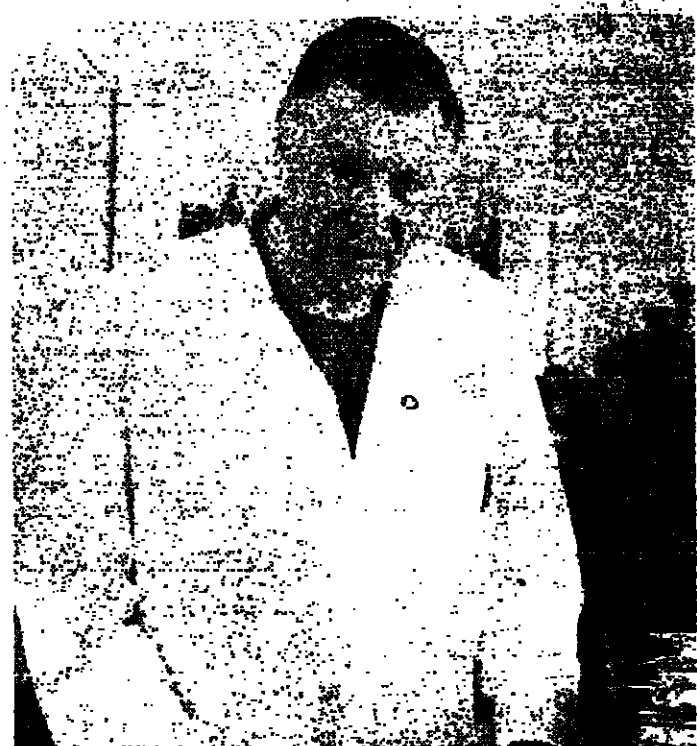
The first method consists of inserting grafts from the donor in the receiver's thymus. The thymus is the place in which certain cells of the immune system, the lymphocytes, are "trained". By proceeding in this way, the receiver's lymphocytes recognise and accept foreign antigens, that is to say those of the donor. Animal experiments show that this manipulation is perfectly effective. The lymphocytes of the receiver animal no longer recognise the graft as a foreign substance.

The second method is to encourage tolerance by swapping cells between the donor and the receiver. Some of the donor's cells (those known as "dendritic") "colonise" the receiver's cells.

This "microchimerism" (the combination on a tiny scale of the genetic features of two distinct organisms) make the receiver tolerant of the foreign graft.

These new methods open up extraordinary prospects, in particular with xenografts, that is to say the use of animal organs, at a time when, with the increase in the number of transplants and grafts being performed, there is a dearth of organs. This could be a great step forward with the impossible, a graft between different species, becoming possible.

Professor Henri Kreis, the organiser of the last International Transplant Conference in Paris, concludes: "If, in the near future, we succeed in including tissue tolerance, it will be fabulous. Transplants will concern everybody. It will become possible to perform more operations and compensate for the great lack of organs available. A



Prof. Christian Cabrol has performed over 900 heart transplant operations

seventy-five year old suffering from a heart attack could be given a heart transplant.

Then, only one kind of death would exist: Brain death — L'Actualite En France.

U.S. study finds passive smoking kills 3,000 a year

By Jerry Stilkind

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has found that as many as 3,000 non-smokers may die a year from lung cancer because they inhale the smoke of people they live or work with.

William Reilly, EPA administrator, told a recent news conference that "smoking is not just a health danger for smokers, but a significant risk for non-smokers, particularly children who are exposed to secondhand smoke."

Louis Sullivan, secretary of health and human services and a physician, joined him at the news conference and announced the launching of a campaign to urge the public to demand bans on smoking at plants, offices and restaurants because of the "poison" of secondhand tobacco smoke.

As with past government studies linking smoking to cancer, the tobacco industry strongly objected to the conclusions, while non-government health organisations urged the federal and local governments to take stronger action against smoking in public places.

This latest report, four years in the making, has generated so much heat that its conclusions were leaked to some newspapers two days before its release and tobacco manufacturers and health groups had news conferences condemning and praising it the day before its publication.

One concern of tobacco makers is the possibility of an increased number of law suits by persons claiming to be harmed by secondhand smoke now that they are armed with a comprehensive 530-page report. An EPA

official said in an interview after the Reilly-Sullivan news conference that the possibility of such suits might turn out to be a major reason for private employers and restaurants to ban smoking.

Officials of Philip Morris USA, a major cigarette manufacturer, said at their news conference that the EPA study does not "convincingly support" the conclusion of increased risk of cancer from secondhand smoke. They also argued that the newest and largest study of the effects of tobacco smoke was not considered by EPA.

Dr. Reilly said in reply to a question at his news conference with Dr. Sullivan that scientists studied 30 reports from around the world in coming to the conclusion that secondhand tobacco smoke produces cancer. EPA analysed 11 U.S. studies, six done in Japan, four in China, four

in Hong Kong, two in Greece, two in Sweden, and one each in England and Scotland.

Dr. Sullivan added that the large study cited by Philip Morris was completed only several months ago, leaving too little time for inclusion in the EPA study. However, its findings are in complete accord with those of the 30 other studies consulted, he said.

"I know of no industry that has so little credibility as the tobacco industry," he said.

The EPA report states that about 434,000 persons die each year in the United States from cancer, heart diseases and respiratory ailments caused by smoking. "Smoking is the leading preventable cause of death in our society today," Dr. Reilly stated in opening remarks. About 140,000 of these deaths are from lung cancer,

according to the report. About 3,000 of these deaths are among non-smokers who inhale tobacco smoke.

Both the smoke rising from cigarettes and that exhaled by smokers contains a complex mix of more than 4,000 compounds, a mix that "contains many known or suspected human carcinogens and toxic agents," the report stated.

Passive smoking is particularly hard on children, the report states, contributing to 150,000 to 300,000 cases annually of respiratory illnesses such as pneumonia, bronchitis and bronchiolitis among children less than 18 months old. That results in

7,500 to 15,000 hospitalisations a year, it estimates.

In addition, the report says that passive smoking worsens the condition of 200,000 to 1 million asthmatic children.

This report did not examine the relationship between passive smoking and heart disease. Some news services articles charge that such a study was killed by EPA officials because EPA was finding that there are more than 10 times as many heart-disease as lung-cancer deaths caused by passive smoking.

Dr. Reilly called the charge "wholly unjustified." The heart disease study is

continuing and is not ready for publication, he said, adding that "we have far better data and more persuasive data on lung cancer than heart disease."

Michael Eriksen, director of the office on smoking and health of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, said in an interview after the Reilly-Sullivan news conference that smoking has dropped the past 30 years to a low of 25 per cent of the population.

In Eastern Europe, however, the current proportion of smokers is 70 to 80 per cent. Smaller proportions smoke in developing countries but the

rate is rising.

"China has a great problem because its population is large and smoking is rising. In the Far East, smoking may lead to millions of deaths a year," he said.

Only a few developed countries — the United States, United Kingdom and Australia — have effective anti-smoking programmes, he said. Even fewer have begun to worry about the effects of passive smoking.

France is an exception but its regulations protecting non-smokers have not yet been effective, he said — U.S. Information Agency.

Smoking inhibits radiation cancer treatments — study

BOSTON (R) — Patients with head or neck cancer who continue to smoke while receiving radiation treatments considerably inhibit the effectiveness of the life-saving therapy, according to new research.

The study, which appears in the latest issue of New England Journal of Medicine, concludes that not only are smokers at higher risk for developing head or neck cancers but that they thwart the best means of treating the disease by continuing to smoke.

The study, by doctors from McMaster University in Ontario, Canada, found that the longer the cancer patients had sworn off cigarettes the more efficiently radiation killed their tumours.

"The results suggest that patients with head and neck cancer who continue to smoke during radiation therapy are less likely to respond to therapy and have a lower rate of survival than patients who do not smoke during treatment," they said.

The cancers disappeared in only 45 per cent of the smokers compared with 74 per cent of the non-smokers. The

likelihood of being alive two years after the cancer treatment was 39 per cent for smokers and 66 per cent for the non-smokers.

For patients who had quit less than 12 weeks before their cancer was discovered, the death rate was 40 per cent lower than for people who continued to smoke.

Among people who had been off cigarettes for more than a year, the risk of death was 70 per cent lower.

The advantage of quitting may be even greater than those results suggest.

The Brown team said radiation treatments might be less effective in smokers because their blood carries fewer immune cells known as natural killer cells.

The tissues of smokers may get less oxygen, which could interfere with the effects of the radiation, they said.

"These results should encourage therapists to advise patients to stop smoking, and investigators should be aware that smoking behaviour may be an important factor in judging if radiation treatment for a tumour is effective, they said.

Gene found that causes immune disorder

LONDON (R) — Researchers have cloned the gene responsible for a rare inherited disorder that cripples the immune system, according to a recent report.

Their work may also shed light on certain types of cancer.

The inherited disorder is X-Linked Agammaglobulinemia, or XLA. Its main symptom is lack of a kind of white blood cell — the B Cells, that make antibodies. Sufferers live under the constant threat of contracting infectious diseases.

The gene the researchers have found is located on the X-Chromosome, a sex chromosome, which explains why the disorder is found only in men.

It also appears to be linked to the proper development of B Cells. People with mutant versions of the gene have XLA because immature B Cells fail to become mature and active.

In a report published in the British scientific journal Nature, researchers from Guy's and St Thomas's Hospitals in London and the Karolinska Institute in Huddinge, Sweden, said the evidence suggests that the normal gene encodes a kind of enzyme called a Tyrosine Kinase, one of a family of similar enzymes

known to be involved in the communication of biochemical signals within cells.

If the enzyme is defective, young B Cells may fail to receive the signals that instruct them to develop.

Mutant forms of other members of this family of genes are associated with cancer. The researchers said it will be interesting to see whether the XLA gene is associated with B Cell lymphomas.

The researchers said XLA is also a candidate for gene replacement therapy.

"The work has diagnostic and therapeutic implications," says Stephen Desiderio of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, John Hopkins Medical School in Baltimore, Maryland, in a companion article commenting on the work.

"It will now be possible to detect carriers and perform prenatal tests by direct analysis of mutations."

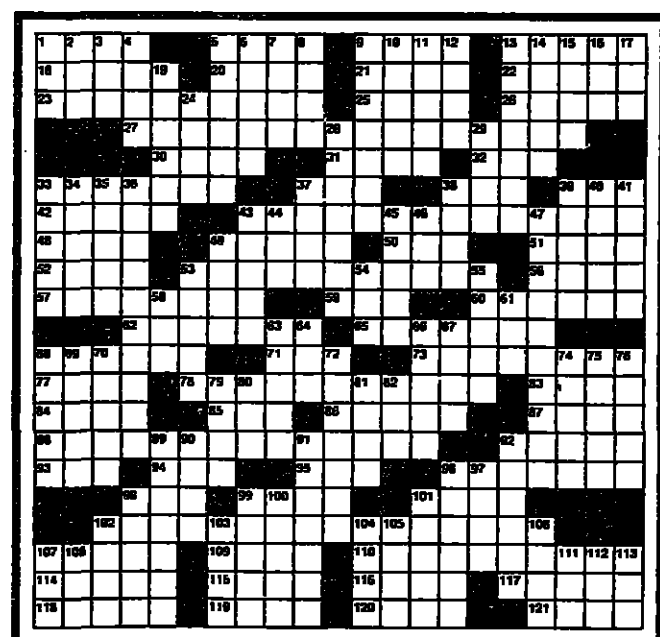
"Because the B-Cell lineage is selectively affected, it is conceivable that XLA may one day be treated by gene replacement therapy. The fact that protein Tyrosine Kinases have also been implicated in tumour development, however, will temper enthusiasm for this approach until more is known about their normal function."

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

INTERPRETING LYRICS

By Louise Sabia

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| ACROSS | DOWN |
| 1 Dashed Kneel | 1 Nasty off |
| 2 Sack | 2 Seven |
| 3 Glove | 3 Tenuous |
| 13 Ten soup | 4 Minuteman |
| 14 Olive suit | 5 Major |
| 20 Fr. magazine | 6 Traitor's |
| 21 Concerning | 7 Hated Yare |
| 22 Lower | 8 Auto Ray |
| 23 How to stand | 9 Rupture of rock |
| 24 By the way | 10 Japanese author |
| 25 Where Jim | 11 On a hot group |
| 26 South | 12 Lined not — (lit) |
| 27 Where Jim | 13 U.S. vendor |
| 28 Kennedy went | 14 Trashed |
| 29 Baseball family | 15 Actor Stuart |
| 30 Shamrock site | 16 Stay |
| 31 Like Thomas | 17 Firm tool |
| 32 — d'hotel | 18 On a ship |
| 33 Even edge | 19 December time |



CRYPTOGRAMS

- RT OIXVMY ZT OVOPCECXVO XA XBT RIX
FTYYMTO MCAT CBOVGSBET ZXSOPCBL
"OSPCOASEPCXB LVSGSBETTY."
- PJLLB EJKLJBSB DSAJRSW CIWSD JLLAS
EDSS JQESD NSEBRIN VJHT VRN DBQCIW
HPBRT.
- SPIRATYR YI SPIRANN NTBQNET JURN
YWAHPWA TQNPUNT IRA YPANPT
BIWUJYPRUI BQUMN HURNT URTMNA.
- YSRC KREPT "ARWEARY" DROPKRIDEPT
WEARY O CRISPY WEDR?

—By Gordon Miller

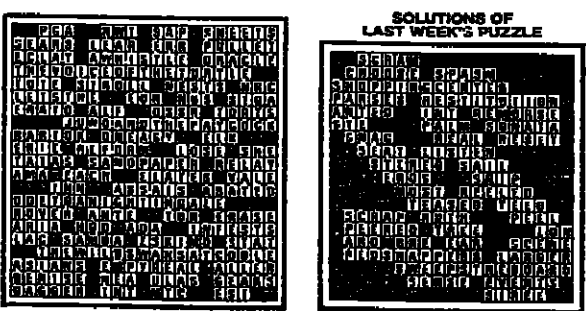
—By Earl Ireland

—By Rita Salvato

—By Ed Huddleson

Diagramless 21 x 21, By James Barrick

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| ACROSS | DOWN |
| 1 Not widely | 1 Scottish caps |
| 2 To and | 2 Escaped of note |
| 3 Audible | 3 Boulder |
| 10 Stream or Sorting | 4 Positive |
| 11 Lab instrument | 5 Tokyo, years ago |
| 14 Roy beverage | 6 Became |
| 15 Atmospheric | 7 Lacer |
| 16 Shiny | 8 — on a Green |
| 17 Indonesian island | 9 Um |
| 18 Scandalous | 10 Slay rope |
| | 11 San Diego's |
| | 12 plate "bun" |
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مكتبة الزمان

Deputies call for obligatory voting

(Continued from page 1)

House meanwhile asked the government to lower to 18 from 20 the legal age for voting and delete item (E) of Article 18 of the elections law for 1986, which bans "members of illegal organisations" from running for Parliament.

In a report to the House, the Judiciary Committee said citizens should become eligible for voting at the age of 18 since this is the legal age in the country.

The committee said that maintaining item (E) of Article 18 of the law "conflicts with the democratic orientation" of the country. Some deputies argued against deleting the article on the grounds that "nothing in it conflicts with democracy."

Item (E) says that candidates for Parliament should not belong to an illegal organisation. That means parties and groupings that (do not uphold) the Constitution. Does this contradict the democratic orientation? Deputy Mohammad Oweidi Al Abbadi said.

Deputy Hussein Mjalli said the item violates Article 24 of the Constitution because it gives administrative governors and not the judiciary the right to decide on the eligibility of candidates for Parliament.

The House then voted 41-54 to delete the item.

The government did not enforce the item during the parliamentary elections of 1989 when members of then illegal parties contested the elections.

Enforcement of firearms rules deferred

(Continued from page 1)

During its two-and-a-half-hour session, the House also approved a revised draft law on youth welfare and asked government to amend the elections law of 1986.

Also on Sunday, the House asked the government to draft a law banning freemasonry from the country. Freemasonry is defined by the Oxford dictionary as "an international fraternity for mutual help and fellowship" with elaborate secret rituals. Deputy Mohammad Oweidi Al Abbadi, who championed the demand for

the draft law, said the movement was part of the international Zionism organisation.

The House also listened to ministers' replies to deputies' questions on a number of local issues and referred some recommendations of the Administration Committee to the government.

In its next session on Sunday, the House will "exchange views" with the government on civil service appointments for the last three years to check "injustices" in granting work opportunities to job seekers.

Expellees to observe hunger-strike

(Continued from page 1)

enemy's barbaric practices through the killing of our children and destruction of our homes, we announce that we shall go on a 24-hour hunger strike as of Thursday," Dr. Rantisi said.

The evictees have been living in a tent camp between territory controlled by the Lebanese army and Israel's self-proclaimed "security zone" since Dec. 18.

Dr. Rantisi also called on Wednesday to withdraw a proposed Security Council resolution because tougher U.N. sanctions were needed against Israel for refusing to take the evictees back.

The evictees initially welcomed the proposal but reversed position as signs mounted that the Security Council would not vote for sanctions.

"We call on the PLO to withdraw its proposal because we see it doesn't meet what is required," Dr. Rantisi said.

"On the contrary it harms our case. We see that sanctions implemented against Arab states like Iraq and Libya are very harsh and include economic boycotts,

bans on flights and aerial bombardments.

"So why should sanctions against Israel be so mild to the extent that Israel would not even feel them?" Dr. Rantisi added.

The PLO in New York circulated a proposed resolution Tuesday to impose sanctions against Israel for failing to obey demands to take back the evictees.

Nasser Al Kidwa, the PLO's observer at the United Nations, said in the event of continued non-compliance by a deadline, tougher sanctions could be applied against the Jewish state.

The proposed resolution would ban all states and their nationals from any dealings with Israeli companies or public establishments involved in violations in the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Israel would also be barred from any conference or meeting dealing with human rights that was sponsored by the United Nations, any inter-governmental organisation or by any state.

Israeli court ruling due today

(Continued from page 1)

was also quoted by Israeli media as saying that talking to Dr. Ghali was "like talking to the wall."

A phone-in poll to a popular television talk show, which drew more than 5,000 responses from Israeli viewers Tuesday night, showed opinion running three-to-one against repatriating the evictees.

The Clinton administration Tuesday declared that "active diplomacy" was the best way to reverse the Israeli expulsions of Palestinians.

As the administration moved to resolve its first Mideast challenge, the State Department all but threatened to veto any effort in the Security Council to punish Israel for the expulsions by imposing sanctions.

"We wouldn't see any constructive purpose in a security council debate," spokesman Richard A. Boucher said. He also made a point of Israel's "difficulties" with "extremist" groups.

"We believe there is an opportunity to resolve the issue through active diplomacy," Mr. Boucher said. "We would like to see those efforts exhausted before the Security Council considers taking action."

The administration hopes to keep the dispute from interfering with its drive to reopen Arab-Israeli negotiations on a Middle East settlement.

"We continue to believe in the importance of the peace process," Mr. Boucher said at the department's daily news briefing.

"We've discussed here before the importance of resolving this issue with the deportees and not allowing it to derail the peace process."

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) probably will delay until next week an appeal to the Security Council for further action on the Israeli expulsions of Palestinians, a PLO official said Wednesday.

PLO Executive Committee member Yasser Abed Rabbo said in Tunis consultations between the PLO and Arab and non-aligned countries were still underway about a draft resolution asking for sanctions against Israel.

"There will be a call by the Arab countries for a (Security Council) session during the next week," Mr. Abed Rabbo told

Reuters.

The PLO circulated a draft proposal at the United Nations in New York for a Security Council resolution to impose economic sanctions on Israel for failing to comply with Resolution 799 calling for the evictees to be brought home.

Israel Radio reported on Wednesday that the United States and Russia have told Israel the issue of sanctions will not be raised at the U.N. Security Council session.

Asked to comment on the report, Mr. Abed Rabbo said: "We have no knowledge of that."

Israel is counting on the United States, its closest friend, to block sanctions and to delay any council meeting until after the high court rules on the legality of the expulsions.

The Security Council never imposed sanctions against Israel for violations of more sweeping resolutions, demanding withdrawal from the Arab land seized in the 1967 war.

Still, the PLO's U.N. observer was hopeful President Bill Clinton would go along, considering his campaign pledges.

"We have a new administration now which indicated repeatedly its respect for human rights, international law and obligations of the United States under international treaties," Nasser Al Kidwa said.

The resolution, copies of which were provided by the PLO, stops short of the sweeping, broad sanctions imposed against Libya, Iraq and Serbia. But it would bar foreign countries or companies from trading with Israeli firms doing business contrary to council resolutions in occupied territories.

Mr. Kidwa told reporters the boycott would apply to Israeli companies building settlements on occupied land and transportation companies which drove the expelled Palestinians to Israel's border with Lebanon.

The draft resolution would also bar Israel from participating in international meetings on human rights. It calls for the council to "consider further measures" on Feb. 9 if Israel does not comply and repatriate the Palestinians.

Mr. Kidwa said those measures would be sanctions covering a broader range of trade with Israel.

Israel, Palestinian informants and activists play deadly game

By Haniham Hamed
The Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Occupied Gaza Strip—The six men who came to Jassem's tiny home gave him a blunt choice: Stop informing on Palestinian activists or face death like hundreds of other collaborators with Israel.

The men had guns and wore masks over their faces. Jassem, unemployed with three mouths to feed, feels he got off lucky. They let him live.

"When I saw the guns, I knew they meant what they said," he explained, asking that his full name or hometown not be used to prevent another visit by Palestinian enforcers — or Israeli agents.

Palestinians militants have been killing suspected informers since their uprising began five years ago. But the pace of the killings has increased, and the methods have become more brutal, in the last few weeks.

One reason is Israel's intensified hunt for activists, who attack those they fear could betray them.

"The activists are nervous and paranoid. They do not trust anybody," said Tawfiq Abu Khusa, a journalist who has spoken out against the killings despite threats on his life.

Raji Sourani, a Palestinian human rights lawyer, says the killings are a response to Israel's recruitment of thousands of informers, whose assistance wins them the army-issued permits to work

in Israel that are often the only avenue to a job.

Jassem said he applied for such a permit eight times before he agreed to supply the names of activists in his neighbourhood.

"There were two choices ahead of me, either I see my children starve to death or work for the Israelis," he said. After agreeing to collaborate, Jassem got his permit.

Mr. Sourani said that Israeli agents, after coercing people into collaboration, do little to protect them.

"The collaborators are like toilet paper — you only use it one time," he said.

This month alone, 12 Palestinians were slain as informers in Gaza. More than two-thirds of all Palestinians killed by fellow Arab

since 1987 — 513 out of 695 — died in the Gaza Strip, though its population is less than that of the West Bank.

No-one knows how many of the dead were really guilty. Some were known collaborators. Others were accused of prostitution or drug dealing, considered offenses against Islam. But in many cases, the only evidence is rumour or an accusation scrawled on a wall.

The brutality of the killings has embarrassed Palestinian leaders. Victims have been beaten, shot and axed to death. Some were lynched. A few, taken for treatment after being attacked, were finished off by gunmen inside hospital rooms.

Israel maintains few of the dead were collaborators. Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant-General Ehud Barak recently

told visiting American Jews that Israel's expulsion of some 400 alleged radicals was meant not just to protect Israeli lives, but those of Palestinians.

While Gazans distrust Israel's explanations, many agree that not all victims were guilty.

"Some are innocent victims who were never given the chance to defend themselves" Mr. Abu Khusa said. "It is very easy to label somebody a collaborator."

He said the killings, by sowing dissension among Palestinians, help Israel keep its hold on the occupied territories.

"Do not expect the son whose father was killed in front of his eyes to love this revolution. He will hate it and will definitely revenge the death of his father," said the 34-year-old journalist.

Mr. Abu Khusa said Palestinians must take responsibility for

stopping the killings by armed youths.

"There is no law on earth that gives the right to any activist to be the interrogator, judge and executioner," he said.

When Mr. Abu Khusa publicly condemned the killings last May, masked men dumped the bodies of two suspected collaborators on his doorstep, telling his 16-year-old sister they were a "gift" for him.

Mr. Abu Khusa fears that unwarranted killings are damaging the Palestinians' society and even their ability to negotiate peace with Israel.

"How can the head of the Palestinian team to the peace talks protest Israeli violations of human rights in the West Bank and Gaza Strip while the Palestinians are violating them too?" he said.

Russia may veto new attacks on Iraq

(Continued from page 1)

has revived Iraqi hopes of rebuilding ties with Moscow and splitting the international coalition standing against it.

The ruling Baath Party newspaper Al Thawra portrayed the presence of the delegation from Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's nationalist liberal Democratic Party as a sign of Russian opposition to "a U.S.-Atlantic aggression against Iraq."

But with the Russian Foreign Ministry calling for legal action against the man who sent them, such hopes may be premature.

An aide to President Yeltsin has denied a report that the Russian leader had ordered the Foreign Ministry to talk to Iraq about resuming oil supplies to Russia.

Russia sharply reduced the shipments to India after the embargo was introduced. Last year it supplied India with only around 1.4 million tonnes compared with a planned four million tonnes.

Interfax quoted Foreign Economic Relations Ministry sources as saying Russia was due to supply India with two million tonnes of oil in 1993.

sources as saying Mr. Yeltsin, on the eve of an official visit to India, had ordered the ministry to step up efforts to create conditions for resuming Iraqi oil supplies to Russia.

"The president did not sign any such directive," presidential spokesman told Reuters.

Interfax said that before the 1991 Gulf crisis the former Soviet Union reexported to India a large amount of Iraqi oil which Baghdad supplied to help pay off its debts to Moscow.

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U.N. reports no problems

(Continued from page 1)

cooled before the collapse of the Soviet Union, its ally and former chief armorer.

State newspapers have highlighted expressions of concern from leading Russian politicians following the U.S.-led air and missile strikes.

But Moscow has distanced itself from the liberal Democratic Party delegation in Baghdad with its Foreign Ministry calling for legal action against the man that sent it, party leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy.

Kuwait's crown prince has meanwhile dismissed a suggestion by Iraq that its territorial claim on their emirate was a thing of the past and said Baghdad remained a threat two years after the Gulf war.

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Courier sends message to semifinal rivals

MELBOURNE (Agencies) — Jim Courier hammered out a ruthless message to the three pretenders for his Australian Open title with a quarter-final demolition of Czech seventh seed Petr Korda Wednesday.

The world number one copied the earlier deeds of Michael Stich, Stefan Edberg and Pete Sampras by marching into the last four without dropping a set, leaving Korda to pick up the pieces after a dismal 6-1 6-0 6-4 pasting. Courier now faces Stich in a heavy-duty battle in one semifinal, while Sampras and Edberg stage a repeat of last year's U.S. Open final in Friday's other contest.

Both matches look potential thrillers, something which could scarcely be said about a succession of cardboard quarter-finals which raised the same questions about the depth in men's tennis as apply to the women's game.

Germany's Stich exploited Frenchman Guy Forget's big occasion nerves to drum out a 6-4 6-4 6-4 victory which took him to his first Grand Slam semifinal since winning Wimbledon in 1991.

Edberg's bad back again behaved itself as the Swedish star eased past compatriot Christian Bergstrom 6-4 6-4 6-1, while Sampras disposed of New Zealand's Brett Steven 6-3 6-2 6-3, again with the minimum of fuss and effort.

Courier has been forced to listen for weeks to people suggesting either Sampras or Edberg will replace him at the top of the world rankings before 1993 is much older.

His response at Flinders Park has been typically unequivocal: "I have five wins, not a set conceded and no sign of any action and I want to encourage the opposition."

The unfortunate Korda, who had been hoping to make amends for his French Open final defeat to Courier last year, was blasted out of sight for lengthy periods, losing 13 games in a row in one nightmarish sequence.

An enforced error count of 50-7 told the story.

The American, chasing his fourth Grand Slam title, said: "Seven enforced errors in three sets is about the lowest I've ever heard of for me."

"I feel great... I'm really happy. When I've got a fresh mind, people are going to have to play great tennis to beat me."

Had Korda been an amateur player on a public court he would have probably thrown his racket in the river and gone in search of a drink.

"No one has played against me like this in the last two years," Korda said. "I was trying to do everything today but had no answer. If Jim plays like this he's got a great chance to win it again."

Much the same sentiments were expressed by Forget and Steven, except they were tipping Stich and Sampras respectively.

Forget, the 11th seed, never really recovered from dropping his serve in the opening game against Stich who he rates as a potential equal to Courier.

"He is maybe not as consistent as Jim Courier but when his game is there he's just as good," was Forget's assessment.

World number three Sampras is not under-rating the size of his task against Edberg, particularly after his defeat to the same man in last year's U.S. Open final.

"It took me a couple of weeks to get over that loss," he said. "I think about it every now and again and it would have been sweet if I had won it. On the other hand, I'm 21 and I still have a good long career ahead of me."

Edberg, who has cut the number of baths he takes per day to relax his back from six to four, also remembers that four-set win at Flushing Meadow clearly.



Stefan Edberg

"It was maybe my best performance ever... I thought about it for a long time and I still do."

"Nowadays I try and peak for the big ones... I like to play best of five sets because it's an advantage to the better player."



Pete Sampras

The Swede, for once, may not be able to count on the most vocal supporters as Sampras is hoping his heritage will draw plenty of support in what is the third-largest Greek-populated city in the world after Athens and Salonika.

Spectators of all nationalities will simply be hoping for a tough match as the tournament reaches its final stages.

This has been the first Australian championship in the Open

era where all four men's quarter-finals have ended in straight sets. The last time it happened at any men's Grand Slam tournament was the 1985 U.S. Open.

Top four face off again

Monica, Steffi, Gabriela and Arantxa. They've become such fixtures at the Grand Slam semifinals that any tennis fan knows them by their first names.

They took 12 of the 16 semifinal spots at the top four events last year, and they will be facing off again Thursday at the Australian Open, where they're the top four seeds.

Monica Seles, the top seed and defending champion, will put her 19-match Australian winning streak on the line against third-seeded Gabriela Sabatini of Argentina, while No. 2 Steffi Graf of Germany tries to use her forehand power to beat speedy Arantxa Sanchez Vicario of Spain, the fourth seed.

All four had tough time in their quarterfinal matches Tuesday.

The graceful Sabatini had to fight off three match points to down 10th-seeded Mary Pierce of France in a three-set match that lasted nearly three hours and didn't end until 1:45 a.m.

A horse Sabatini called her comeback one of the best of her career. But while Pierce certainly had stung in her shots, Sabatini knows that Seles' two-fisted blasts and ability to concentrate will be even tougher.

"I'm really looking forward to this match," Sabatini said. "I feel I'm ready to play against Monica. I'm going to have to be pretty aggressive and just try to fight each point because that's how she plays."

Graf wore down seventh-seeded Jennifer Capriati in the quarterfinals with a barrage of groundstrokes that had the 16-year-old American running from side to side. She can't be sure that will happen against Sanchez Vicario, who seems capable of retrieving shots all day.

Graf, who hasn't lost a set in her five matches and has reached at least the quarterfinals of 26 consecutive Grand Slam tournaments, says a little help from some male friends, particularly Sweden's Lars Wahlgren, has prepared her for the female heavy hitters.

Sanchez Vicario, who like Graf had to come back from down a service break in both sets against fifth-seeded Mary Joe Fernandez, just keeps quietly rolling along with a baseline game that shows virtually no weaknesses. It's like hitting against a wall — the ball just keeps coming back.

"I am just going to play my own game and let's see what happens. I am not going to change anything," she said of her match against Graf. "I know the way she plays, and she knows me very well. I don't have anything to lose."

Auriol wins Monte Carlo Rally

MONTE CARLO (R) — Didier Auriol conjured up a breathtaking performance to win the Monte Carlo Rally Wednesday and then calmly confessed he is not really interested in the sport.

"I'm certainly not rally fan," the French Toyota driver said after his third triumph in the principality. "I would never go to an event in which I wasn't competing."

"What interests me is pure driving skill. I'm obsessed by the search for perfection."

Auriol's obsession carried him from a seemingly impossible position to a highly acclaimed victory as he took barely conceivable risks to win the last four stages in a row.

Fellow-Frenchman Francois Delecour, whose Ford was piped for victory by Auriol's late surge, described him as definitely the best driver in the world at the moment.

Auriol's spectacularly aggressive style as he homes in impatiently on hairpin bends, skids hair-raisingly round and roars away again makes many of the other driver look timid in comparison.

"The pleasure in it comes from the feeling of skidding," he said. "But it's also in looking for the limits."

"There are at least seven drivers capable of winning world championship rallies. It promises to be a great fight."

Super Bowl to attract 1 billion viewers

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Michael Jackson, about 3,500 children and more than a tonne of pyrotechnics add up to the largest and splashiest halftime show ever for the Super Bowl.

More than 260 people assembled by Radio City Music Hall productions began planning 18 months ago for Sunday's show in the Rose Bowl at Pasadena, where the Dallas Cowboys will play the Buffalo Bills.

Jackson's presence and the sheer enormity involved puts the first Super Bowl halftime show to shame. In 1967, marching bands from the Universities of Arizona and Michigan entertained at the Los Angeles Coliseum.

Organisers say Sunday's show will be the grandest to date, highlighted by Jackson's miniconcert.

He will perform on a stage weighing more than 10 tonnes specially created for the show.

More than 250 off-duty police and firefighters will set up and tear down the 22-piece stage in five minutes before and after the show. The stage is equipped with all-terrain tires to protect the playing field.

The NFL estimates Sunday's game will attract more than 1 billion viewers in the United States and 86 other countries.

Al Ahli protest their loss to Al Orthodoxy

AMMAN (J.T.) — Al Ahli Wednesday presented a memorandum to the Jordan Basketball Federation in which it objected to "obvious technicalities and mismanagement by referee" which led to their 84-81 loss to Al Orthodoxy Tuesday in the first division Basketball Championship match.

Al Ahli based their objection on a video record of the match which showed that Al Orthodoxy were awarded two extra points that were ruled out by the referee. However, the score sheet and score board did not eliminate the two points.

Furthermore, one of the referees gave Al Orthodoxy's Muntaser Abul Tayyeb and Al Ahli's Marwan Al Saeedi simultaneous fouls when Al Ahli was leading 75-74 with only 15 seconds remaining of the match. In addition, the referee gave Saeedi a technical foul and awarded Al Orthodoxy two free shots. Although Abul Tayyeb was granted his fifth foul at the moment, he was allowed by the referee to shoot for Al Orthodoxy, thus scoring one point. This made the score 75-75 and led to extending the match by five minutes.

Al Ahli demanded that the federation consider them the winners of the match and thus the holders of the championship title. The federation was expected to decide on the issue late Wednesday.

Daly gets 500th win as Nets beat Lakers

EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey (R) — Chuck Daly became the 15th coach in National Basketball Association history to record 500 career victories when his New Jersey Nets beat the Los Angeles Lakers 106-91 Tuesday.

Daly owns a lifetime record of 500-520 with New Jersey, the Detroit Pistons and Cleveland Cavaliers.

The Nets remain in second place in the Atlantic Division, two games behind the New York Knicks, who also won Tuesday.

Patrick Ewing poured in 26 points and grabbed 21 rebounds and the Knicks held off a late Philadelphia surge to record a 98-90 win over the visiting 76ers.

The win was the fourth in a row for New York and the 609th for coach Pat Riley, who is 12th on the all-time victory list.

In Portland, the red hot Trail Blazers took over sole possession of second place in the Pacific Division with their sixth consecutive victory, a 143-133 win over Golden State in a contest in which defence took a back seat to scoring.

Clyde Drexler scored 31 points and Cliff Robinson added 26 to lead the streaking Blazers, winners of 11 of their last 13 games.

Chris Mullin had 31 points and Latrell Sprewell chipped in with 27 for the Warriors, who lost for the seventh time in eight games.

The two-time defending NBA champion Chicago Bulls took on the League's worst team and crushed the Mavericks in Dallas by 35 points with a 123-88 rout.

Scottie Pippen collected 19 points, 11 rebounds and seven assists to lead eight Bulls in double figures.

In Orlando, Rookie centre Shaquille O'Neal scored 27 points and 16 rebounds to lead the Magic to a 120-105 triumph over the Atlanta Hawks.

At Washington, Michael Adams drove to the hoop for a buzzer-beating lay-up that gave the Bullets a 104-102 overtime victory over the Miami Heat.

At Utah, Karl Malone scored 28 points and pulled down 13 rebounds to lead the Jazz past the Cleveland Cavaliers, 113-96.

Jeff Malone added 16 points and John Stockton collected 14 points in 14 assists to snap a five-game losing streak at home, paced by Blue Edwards' 24 points, in a 100-86 victory over the Houston Rockets.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY JANUARY 29, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Thoughts that prevail today are best utilized in future and need not necessarily be acted at this time. If you need dependable advice of financial assistance, plot your course tonight.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Whatever your task whether at home, on the road, at shops or places of business, in salesmanship, etc you need to have a more perfected plan for doing.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) The talent you are most anxious to express or do better is the one in which you should spend your time so get it in condition to use openly.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Certainly you need to use more thought about your dwelling and just how you can do without and to lighten and improve conditions at your home.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) It's important that you use care on the highway and in motion in anyway or you could find it to be very costly in more ways than one.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) All sorts of little details of property and money matters are apt to confront you now but don't let them get you down but handle them efficiently.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You are disgruntled today and are apt to lash out in directions that

have nothing to do with the cause of your discontentment so think, be silent.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Consider well the various tasks awaiting your attention and utilize this day to your advantage by getting them in back of you by your own operative ability.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Some friend or acquaintance who is very discriminating and particular can see the flaws in a plan you have to gain your hopes so listen with care.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Take no chances whatever where your reputation or any vocational activities are concerned for criticism is ripe in the outside world today.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Trying to make a new course of action unfold as you wish can be quite difficult today so put your efforts in better understanding motivations.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You feel you have more obligations that you can attend to but take the bull by the horns and you find you get them done and enjoy doing them.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You want to have a down to earth and serious conversation with an important partner but the time is not quite ripe so maintain a light-hearted stance.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMAR HIRSCH
© 1992 Tribune Media Services, Inc.

Both vulnerable. South deals.
NORTH
♠ A 10 9 6 5 3
♥ A 10
♦ 8 6 3 2
♣ 7

WEST EAST
♠ K 8 ♠ J 7 4 2
♥ K Q J 7 3 5
♦ J 4 ♦ K 10 9 5
♣ J 10 9 8 ♣ 8 5 4 3

SOUTH
♠ 9 8 6 4 2
♥ A Q 7
♦ A K Q 2
♣ 9

The bidding:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
2 ♠ Pass 3 ♠ Pass
4 ♠ Dbl Pass Pass

Opening lead: Jack of ♠ Youth will be served. Young New York star Blair Seidler, given a reprieve at the very first trick, showed that trumps aren't everything on this deal from the recent Spring North American Championships in Pasadena, Calif.

North was caught in a systemic trap on the second round of the auction. Two spades would have been regressive, and two diamonds

would have been fourth-suit forcing—obviously the North hand was not nearly strong enough for such action. Since a preference to two hearts also would have been discouraging, North gambled on an invitational jump preference to three hearts despite being a little short in the trump department.

After a diamond lead, West soon learned it does not always pay to double on length and strength in trumps. Declarer won the first trick with the queen and cashed three rounds of clubs for two diamond discards. The queen of spades went to the ace, a spade was ruffed and the last club was ruffed with the ten. Ace of diamonds and another forced West to ruff and dummy overruffed with the ace. When declarer next ruffed a spade with the eight, West could overruff, but at the end was forced to concede the fulfilling trick to declarer's nine of trumps.

West could have defeated the contract with a different opening lead. Can you spot it?

Not just a trump, but a four heart. Dummy can win with the ten, but declarer must either concede three trump tricks and a club or four trump tricks. Try it.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY JANUARY 28, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: If there's passion or anger around an issue with a loved one or family member, it could come up today. Unresolved past errors could surface in hostile circumstances unless discretion in word and deed is used. Simple cuisine best in p.m.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Pause before you commit yourself to some outlet with appeals to you in "idea" but that you do not yet know enough about to take it on at this time.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You need to be careful not to get into an argument at home over something that has not much to do with family life but tonight enjoy long-time outside pleasures.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Getting into a confrontation with an outsider who knows it all helps no one so just keep silent and tonight you can have a happy time at home.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Steer clear of arguments and discussions over financial or business matters during the daytime and tonight get out with congenial comrades.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Whatever you have that requires personal concentration on it during the day can bring you the progress you desire tonight get your financial affairs in order.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Trying to break out from under

some restriction can make it even more difficult to bear so accept it and tonight do what you personally enjoy most.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Avoid the social whirl during the day and put efforts into quietly making your personal dreams come true, tonight plan for expressing new ambitions.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Outside interest can prove a snare and a delusion during the day while tonight you see just how you can make your personal wishes become yours.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Stick to courses of action already put in motion though pressured to be off to new places, expectants and tonight enjoy yourself out on the town.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Your attachment does not seem to see eye to eye with you in a matter of importance to you but hold your tongue, tonight new views can exist.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You find an associate in a strange mood during the day so don't try to make joint conditions better but tonight your attachment brings happiness.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You don't like your environment or some phases of it but there is nothing to do about it for the moment, tonight arrange future tasks with associates.

THE BETTER HALF.

By Harris



"If we improve our marriage a tiny bit every day we'll be totally happy by August 2063!"

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

HERBT

KIMPS

DEYMEI

DOULCY

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

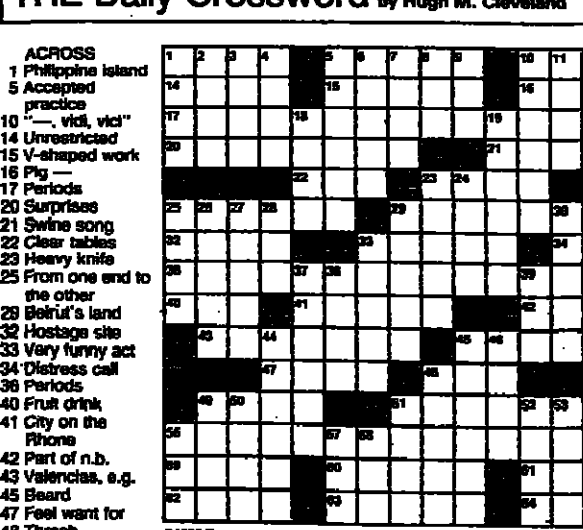
Print answer here: _____

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: MOTIF TANGY DAMASK FEDORA

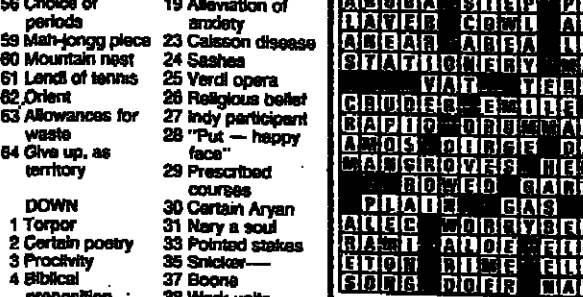
Answer: A stepping stone to some girl's happiness — A DIAMOND

THE Daily Crossword by Hugh M. Cleveland



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Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:



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Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

ANSWER: A stepping stone to some girl's happiness — A DIAMOND

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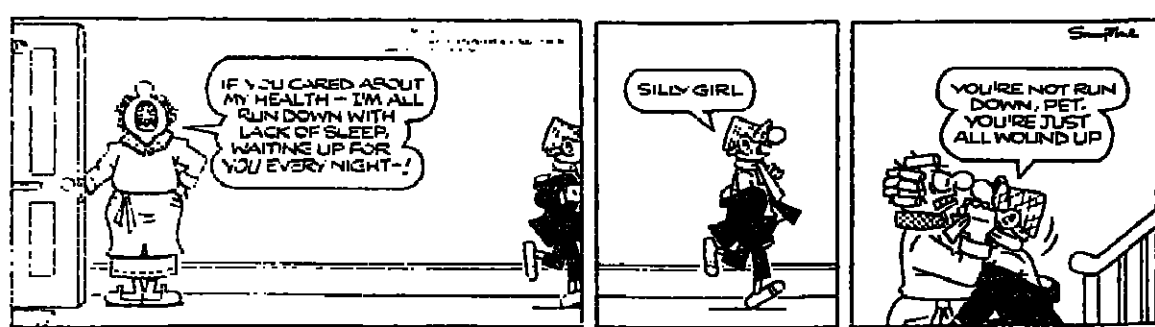
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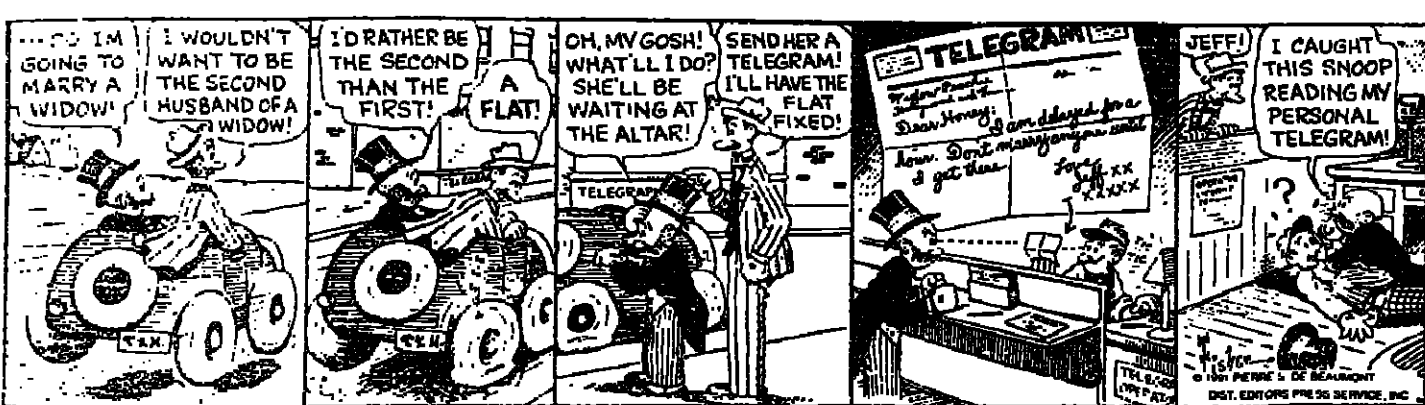
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Blatt'n'Jeff



Financial Markets

Jordan Times
in co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York C2046 Date 27/1/93	Tokyo C2046 Date 27/1/93
Sterling Pound*	1.5445	1.5323
Deutsche Mark	1.5713	1.5822
Swiss Franc	1.4425	1.4595
French Franc	5.3295	5.3518 **
Japanese Yen	123.60	124.00
European Currency Unit	1.2425	1.2376 **

* USD Per STG
** European Opening for 28th Jan. GMT

Eurocurrency Interest Rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	3.06	3.18	3.43	3.78
Sterling Pound	6.25	6.06	5.93	5.87
Deutsche Mark	8.56	8.37	8.00	7.50
Swiss Franc	5.58	5.38	5.43	5.25
French Franc	11.87	11.75	10.31	9.25
Japanese Yen	3.62	3.53	3.46	3.37
European Currency Unit	9.43	9.43	9.37	8.81

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm ²	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm ²
Gold	330.90	6.50	Silver	3.78	.080

* 25 Tons

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.685	0.687
Sterling Pound	1.0485	1.0537
Deutsche Mark	0.4321	0.4343
Swiss Franc	0.4685	0.4708
French Franc	0.1279	0.1285
Japanese Yen*	0.5514	0.5542
Dutch Guilder	0.3842	0.3861
Swedish Krona	0.0964	0.0969
Italian Lira*	0.0471	0.0473
Belgian Franc	0.0210	0.0211

* Per 100

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	1.7960	1.8070
Lebanese Lira*	0.0355	0.0405
Saudi Riyal	0.1822	0.1834
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.2300	2.2900
Qatari Riyal	0.1850	0.1872
Egyptian Pound	0.1950	0.2150
Omani Riyal	1.7470	1.7610
UAE Dirham	0.1850	0.1872
Greek Drachma*	0.3200	0.3310
Cypriot Pound	1.4550	1.4675

* Per 100

CAB Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	25/1/93	Close	26/1/93	Close
All-Share	191.03		189.94	
Banking Sector	139.40		138.36	
Insurance Sector	208.67		208.24	
Industry Sector	261.16		260.00	
Services Sector	253.82		253.28	

December 31, 1990 = 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

One U.S. dollar	1.2693/98	Canadian dollar	1.5810/20
	1.7790/800	Deutsche marks	1.4592/602
	32.50/54	Swiss francs	5.3510/60
	1460/1465	French francs	124.00/05
	124.00/05	Italian lire	7.0900/1000
	6.7100/200	Japanese yen	6.0800/900
	1.5200/10	Norwegian crowns	6.0800/900
One sterling	1.5200/10	Danish crowns	330.75/331.25
One ounce of gold	330.75/331.25		

De Beers CSO sees stable diamond demand in 1993

LONDON (R) — Global demand for diamonds is shifting to Asia and should help to stabilise retail sales in 1993 at last year's depressed levels, diamond producer De Beers' Central Selling Organisation (CSO) says.

CSO Deputy Chairman Alex Barbour gave the outlook in an interview with the Israeli diamond trade magazine Mazal U'Bracha released by De Beers in London.

The forecast that Russian diamond production will drop 25 per cent this year, with possible shortages even of some types of polished diamonds.

"We, at the moment, can't see any reason for our (diamond) sales to drop any further," he was quoted as saying in the article which was being published Wednesday.

The CSO is the diamond marketing arm of De Beers Centenary A.G., part of South Africa's powerful Oppenheimer family empire, and sells around 80 per cent of the world's diamond production.

"Worldwide, retail sales will not be all that different, (in 1993). What we're seeing is some juggling in the pipeline," Mr. Barbour said.

The CSO expects an upsurge in demand in South East Asia, including Thailand and China, in 1993. Retail sales would be lower in Japan, but higher in the United States, he added.

As a result, Mr. Barbour indicated the CSO would be increasing its Far East advertising by several million dollars this year, including some consumer advertising in mainland China.

Earlier this month the CSO announced its worst annual rough diamond sales figures since 1987. The figures showed that 1992 sales, at \$3.42 billion, had fallen 13 per cent from the previous year's \$3.93 billion.

On the supply side, Mr. Barbour also unveiled CSO estimates for Russian production in 1993 for the first time.

"At the moment there is less coming out of their (Russian) mines — about 25 per cent less in the actual delivered production this year," Mr. Barbour said. "We don't get the official figures of course. But, according to our information that figure seems reasonable."

Despite all the problems in the Russian diamond industry he saw no changes to the current supply contract between new marketing venture diamonds of Russia-Sakha and the CSO.

Last year's operations to stabilise the market in the face of a worldwide glut of diamonds had not badly affected the CSO's own financial position, he added.

"We have extremely large facilities that we can draw on today, and a tremendously strong balance sheet which shows assets in investments outside the diamond industry of approximately \$5 billion," he said.

Mr. Barbour said there was no truth to suggestions the CSO may need to borrow from Luxembourg-based mining group Minoro S.A., jointly controlled by De Beers and the Oppenheims' Anglo-American Corp. of South Africa, to support diamond buying.

KLM, other European airlines study links

AMSTERDAM (R) — Dutch flag carrier KLM said Wednesday it had held informal talks with Swissair, SAS and Austrian Airlines and the four European carriers were investigating a possible strategic link.

"KLM, SAS, Swissair and Austrian Airlines decided Wednesday after some informal contacts to investigate the possibility of official negotiations coming to a form of strategic cooperation between the companies," KLM Royal Dutch Airlines N.V. said in a statement.

Negotiations between KLM and British Airways PLC, aimed at creating a global airline structured along the lines of Anglo-Dutch multinationals like Unilever and Royal Dutch/Shell, broke down last Friday.

At the time KLM, reporting that the two airlines were divided

over how much each company was worth, said it would take a break before actively investigating new ties.

Aviation industry analysts said the so-called European quality alliance of Swissair, SAS and Austrian Airlines would be a next best partner for KLM.

A full alliance would create a combine with turnover of about \$11.7 billion, based on figures for 1991, just behind leading carriers such as AMR Corp's American Airlines and United Airlines.

KLM has often said that it needed a European partnership to meet its goal of raising its European market share to 10 per cent from about three per cent at present.

The four airlines said there would be no further statements while cooperation was studied.

Gulf Air cuts weekend rates by 50%

MANAMA, Bahrain (Agencies) — Gulf Air announced Tuesday it was cutting weekend rates by 50 per cent to foster regional tourism and to help promote social ties in the Gulf.

The airline is owned by Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and the emirate of Abu Dhabi.

Saleem Bin Ali Al Siabi, the airline's executive president, said in a statement that the reduced economy-class fares will become effective Feb. 1.

The cuts are valid only for round-trip tickets for Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, the announcement said.

The Muslim holy day is Friday, and most workers are off Thursdays.

The initiative was due to Gulf Air's "keenness to support the efforts of the member governments to develop domestic tourism," the statement said.

It added that the lower fares also would "give a chance to its sons and residents to know the civilisation and culture of each place, strengthen the bonds of brotherhood and friendship, and develop social links among the Gulf families."

There are expatriate communities around the Gulf, but only nationals can travel freely among Gulf countries without meeting strict entry and exit requirements.

Gulf Air is expected to post a net profit of around 17 million dinars (\$45 million) in 1992, an airline official said Wednesday.

Gulf Air had a record net profit of 18 million dinars (\$47.7 million) in 1991.

Mr. Al Siabi said in August last year the company would spend \$300 million on six Airbus A-340s for delivery in 1994 and was taking options on another six A-340s.

Japan's NEC bows out of slumping VCR business

TOKYO (R) — Electronics firm NEC said Tuesday it had stopped making video cassette recorders (VCRs), the first Japanese firm to abandon the product.

"The audio-visual business is terrible now and with all the competition around, we can't make a profit in VCRs," said Hideaki Ajima, a spokesman for NEC Home Electronics, the consumer arm of NEC Corp.

Japanese firms made 7.16 million VCRs in 1988 but only 3.9 million in the first 11 months of 1992.

NEC home electronics is now buying video recorders from Sanyo and sticking the NEC label on them to continue supplies to its chain of retail stores.

"We're restructuring and want to get rid of unprofitable areas," Mr. Ajima said.

Azerbaijan to boost its caviar production

MOSCOW (R) — The former Soviet republic of Azerbaijan plans a huge increase in black caviar production this year, ITAR-TASS news agency has said.

It quoted the chief of the state company Azerbalyk, in charge of caviar production, as saying the planned output for 1993 was 100 tonnes, compared to a much smaller annual tonnage for the last 50 years.

Hafiz Gadzhiziyev gave no precise figures for past production. Interfax News Agency put last year's caviar production in Azerbaijan at 34 tonnes.

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UAE sloughs off Gulf war slump

ABU DHABI (R) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE), recovering from the Gulf war, has reported gross domestic product (GDP) rose to 128 billion dirhams (\$34.9 billion) for 1992, a report has said.

The planning ministry annual report estimates that GDP grew at an annual rate of 2.2 per cent. It said the estimate was annualised on the basis of half-year results.

GDP in 1991, the year of the Gulf war, slipped less than one per cent to 125.2 billion dirhams (\$34.1 billion).

Officials in the oil-rich Gulf state say growth in the non-oil sector and a trade surplus last year are proof it has weathered the effects of the Gulf war in 1991.

"All signals indicate the economy is not in a recession. Look at government expenditure, the building and business sectors," ministry of planning economist Rihan Fayez told Reuters.

The UAE registered a trade surplus in 1992 with exports of 80.4 billion dirhams (\$21.9 billion) from the UAE's seven emirates exceeding imports of 60.2 billion dirhams (16.4 billion).

"(It) was a year of economic prosperity," UAE Planning Minister Humaid Bin Ahmad Al Mualla said last week.

Sheikh Humaid projected that GDP as much as 4.8 per cent in the full year, but even then it would lag behind inflation.

GDP figures in the annual report are in current prices which do not take into account inflation, which officials say stood at 5.5 per cent in 1992.

In 1991 the official inflation rate was 5.3 per cent.

The report said the UAE population rose in 1992 to 2.01 million from 19 million in 1991. About 70 per cent are foreigners.

United Technologies announces \$333 m loss, plans to cut 10,000 jobs

HARTFORD, Connecticut (AP) — United Technologies Corp. (UTC) reported a \$333 million fourth-quarter loss Tuesday and said it will eliminate more than 10,000 jobs at its Pratt and Whitney subsidiary.

In a letter to Pratt and Whitney employees, the jet engine-maker's president, Karl Kraper, said the division lost about \$500 million in 1992 and would have to speed up its previously announced restructuring.

He said Pratt and Whitney now plans to reduce its overall staffing from 40,664 workers at the end of 1992 to no more than 30,000 by the end of 1994. Of the more than 10,000 jobs being cut, he said 6,700 would be in Connecticut and 1,500 in Florida.

"This action is being taken in response to the deepening recession in the aviation industry and strong competitive pressures," Kraper said in the letter. "Our goal is to make ourselves recession-proof."

The fourth-quarter deficit posted by United Technologies translates to a per-share loss of \$2.77 and was narrower than the loss of \$1.25 billion, or \$10.33 per share, during the fourth 1991 quarter.

For the year, United Technologies reported an after-tax loss of \$287 million, or \$2.67 per share, an improvement over the loss of \$1.02 billion, or \$10.33 per share, reported in 1991 when the

company took restructuring and environmental charges of \$1.53 billion.

The company blamed the latest quarterly loss largely on the continued slump of its power systems segment — which includes Pratt and Whitney.

"We continue to see unprecedented turmoil and financial losses in the commercial airline industry," said Robert Daniell, UTC's chairman and chief executive officer.

"However, recent management changes at Pratt and Whitney and intensified actions to improve Pratt's competitiveness in commercial aircraft engine markets reinforce our confidence that UTC will achieve its performance objectives in the years ahead," Mr. Daniell said.

The power system segment took a one-time charge of \$701 million in the fourth quarter, including \$447 million to cover credit and other exposures related to the airline industry, \$169 million "for various contract matters" and \$85 million to cover the costs of the additional layoffs, the company said.

Besides the layoffs at Pratt and Whitney, UTC said its Hamilton Standard subsidiary will cut 700 jobs over the next two years. Hamilton Standard, which makes space suits and other aerospace equipment, has cut 4,000 jobs since 1990.

THE ITALIAN EMBASSY
(CULTURAL SECTION)
ANNOUNCE

The starting of Italian language classes for foreigners (level 1 and 2) on Saturday, February 6th, 1993. 45 hours, 3 times per week from 6.30 to 8.00 p.m. at the Terra Sancta College, Jabal Al Lwdeih

For information and registration please call the Terra Sancta College (Ph. 622366) from 5.00 to 7.00 p.m. or the Cultural Section of the Italian Embassy (Ph. 638185).

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BODYGUARD

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Free Car Parking

Cinema Tel: 634144

PHILADELPHIA

Danny Glover — in

FLIGHT OF THE INTRUDER

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

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Serbs retake key Croatia village

PRKOS, Croatia (R) — Serb irregulars recaptured a key village from Croatian troops Wednesday in a counter-attack on the new war front in northern Dalmatia.

It was the first reverse the Croats had suffered in a six-day blitz to seize back Serb-occupied land east of the Adriatic coast of Zadar.

"Skabrnje has fallen. Our guys ran away," a soldier in Prkos told Reuters as troops in full combat gear ran down the road away from the village of Skabrnje which they had taken only 36 hours before.

There was no clear indication whether the counter-attack was part of a rumoured Serbian counter-offensive across the new front.

Croatian forces advanced steadily after launching an offensive Friday into the Serb-held Krnjina region behind a U.N. truce line.

They were apparently so confident of their hold on Skabrnje that it was the last scheduled stop on a bus tour of the battlefield arranged for journalists Wednesday.

But officers leading the two busloads suddenly began to get nervous in the small seaside port of Novigrad, a few kilometres northwest of Skabrnje, when an artillery exchange grew louder and fiercer.

Croatian and Serb forces were pounding each other with heavy artillery, tanks and rockets in a fierce barrage which soldiers said came from the south.

Incoming Serbs fire slammed into advanced Croatian positions out of sight of Novigrad and outgoing Croatian shells screamed over the head of reporters at a distance which the soldiers said was about two kilometres from the front line.

Croatian military command began the day in an upbeat mood, arranging the most sweeping guided tour yet of the battlefield inland from the port of Zadar for journalists made impatient by tight control of front information.

They toured villages and hamlets recently retaken from Serb forces and chatted with relaxed and laughing Croatian troops.

But close to Prkos, nine



A Croatian soldier posted at an observation point atop a roof in the village of Prkos points toward the new front-line with Serbian forces (AFP photo).

kilometres west of Skabrnje, reporters dived for cover when a shell whined loudly overhead.

A few hundred metres down the road at Prkos, soldiers in battle gear ran into the road waving their arms to stop the buses which were swiftly turned around and driven to safety.

There was no immediate confirmation from the Croatian military command that Skabrnje had fallen.

France has put eight fighter-bombers and four air-defence interceptors on alert in Corsica as a measure to protect French U.N. peacekeeping forces in former Yugoslavia, an armed forces spokesman said Wednesday.

The Jaguar fighter-bombers and Mirage 2000 interceptors were sent to the Solenzara base in Corsica pending the arrival of a naval task force, led by the aircraft carrier Clemenceau, in the Adriatic this weekend, he said. The spokesman said the bombers had been moved from mainland France "in case we have to protect our soldiers on the ground."

He said an earlier statement by an air force spokesman that the planes might be used to enforce a U.N. no-fly zone over Bosnia was erroneous.

Defence officials played down media reports that French U.N. peacekeepers were trapped in the

fighting in the Serb-held Krajina region of eastern Croatia, where two French soldiers were killed Monday.

Defence Minister Pierre Joxe will see off the 27,000-tonne Clemenceau and its support ships from the Mediterranean port of Toulon Thursday on a mission to protect French forces in Croatia, his office said.

The ship will carry 30 planes and 15 helicopters.

Military experts believe that the imminent arrival in the Adriatic of the Clemenceau and Britain's Ark Royal aircraft carrier could mean that Western nations are preparing to pull out their troops from former Yugoslavia.

Germany warned Croatia Wednesday to stop immediately its offensive against the Serb-held Krajina enclave or face the same international condemnation as Serbia.

Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel said in a statement he had written to Croatia's President Franjo Tudjman to protest against the offensive, which has shattered a year-long truce in Croatia.

"Croatia has opened itself up to the charge it is jeopardising the Geneva peace conference on Yugoslavia and a political way out of the conflict, precisely when progress seems possible," he said.

Mr. Kinkel said rebel Serbs who control a third of Croatia had obstructed a peace plan by United Nations envoy Cyrus Vance under which they should have been disarmed and allowed Croat refugees to return home pending a final political solution. "Nevertheless there is no justification for using military force," he said.

Meanwhile Bosnian Croat forces said ferocious fighting with Muslims erupted in central Bosnia Wednesday and they accused their estranged civil war allies of launching a full-blown offensive against them.

Artillery, mortar and infantry battles raged around the west-central town of Busovaca after Croat forces blocked roads to intercept arms supplies for Muslim troops.

Officials of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said Muslim-Croat hostilities had blocked a road corridor between the Adriatic coast and central Bosnia piled by UNHCR convoys to reach 1.6 million war-stricken civilians.

Serb insurgents who have seized 70 per cent of Bosnia in opposition to its March 1992 secession from Yugoslavia also resumed their relentless bombardment of the capital Sarajevo Wednesday despite ongoing Geneva peace talks.

Three people were reported killed when a mortar bomb exploded near U.N. Headquarters in Sarajevo and residents fled to bomb shelters in some of the worst shelling for weeks.

Vesko Vego, spokesman for the Croatian Defence Council (HVO), Bosnian Croats' militia army, said the Busovaca fighting marked "the biggest crisis between Muslims and Croats ever."

He said "Muslim extremist forces" advancing southwest from Zenica and Laseva were blasting Croat positions with artillery, howitzers, mortars, multiple rocket launchers and small arms.

In Geneva, Bosnia's Muslim-led government threatened Wednesday to quit long-running Geneva peace talks, accusing its Serb foes of shipping in new heavy weapons and stepping up attacks against Muslim civilians.

Havel elected 1st Czech Republic president

PRAGUE, Czech Republic (Agencies) — Vaclav Havel, who helped Czechoslovakia break free of communism but as president couldn't stop it from splitting in two, has been elected president of the new Czech Republic Tuesday.

A playwright who led the 1989 "velvet revolution," Mr. Havel was Czechoslovakia's first post-communist president and remains the best-known Czech politician at home and abroad.

Even many of his opponents said they could imagine no one else as the new republic's first president.

He easily defeated his only two opponents, winning 109 votes in the 200-member parliament as the nominee of the four-party governing coalition of Premier Vaclav Klaus, Marie Striborova of the Communist Party received 49 votes, and Miroslav Sladek of the extreme-right Republicans had only 14.

He will be inaugurated next Tuesday for a five-year term.

"I thank the parliament for the confidence it has expressed in me by electing me the first president of the Czech Republic," Mr. Havel, 56, said after the vote.

Later, he told reporters that he was "more experienced and wiser," than when he first served.

In Bratislava, Slovakia's parlia-



Elderly women enthusiastically clap hands during a rally in support of former Czechoslovakian President Vaclav Havel who was elected president of the newly independent Czech Republic (AFP photo).

ment failed Wednesday for a second day to elect a new president in a further blow to Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar.

The assembly is dominated by Mr. Meciar's Movement For a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) which had nominated Vice-Premier Roman Kovac as the first president of independent Slovakia.

But he failed Tuesday and again Wednesday to get the required three-fifths majority of votes.

Neither Mr. Kovac, a 52-year-old physician, nor Milan Ftacnik, 36, a mathematician proposed by the former Communists, the Party of the Democratic Left (SDL), received the necessary 90 votes to be elected.

Of deputies present Wednesday in the 150-strong parliament, Mr. Kovac got 78 votes and Mr. Ftacnik 31. Thirty deputies ab-

stained and seven cast invalid votes.

The date for a new round will be set later.

Both successor states have opted for parliamentary democracies with relatively weak presidencies. Most of the executive powers rest with their premiers.

As Czech president, Mr. Havel will be able to negotiate international treaties and exercise limited veto power over legislation. He also will be commander-in-chief of the military.

Havel's election was delayed for hours while a few extreme right-wing parliamentary deputies took advantage of the televised debate to accuse Mr. Havel of, among other things, having ties to the former Communist secret police.

Mr. Havel becomes president of a state he hoped would never have to exist.

Pretoria seeks to end row with Inkatha

CAPE TOWN (R) — South Africa's chief government negotiator met leaders of the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) Wednesday to try and patch up relations after a row in which the two sides traded charges of racism and incompetence.

Government and IFP sources said both sides were anxious in talks between government negotiator Roelf Meyer and the Inkatha delegation led by party Chairman Frank Mdlalose to heal the rift that scuttled a two-day meeting last week.

Last week's meeting, their first

in nine months, ended abruptly after an exchange of notes in which Inkatha called the government sellouts and Meyer dismissed Inkatha's views as "banal nonsense" drafted by political incompetents.

IFP leader Chief Mangosuthu Buthezi later accused the government of racism. He said the cabinet saw him as a "kaffir," a pejorative term for blacks, unable to formulate his own opinions.

Wednesday's meeting started a day after the conclusion of four-day talks between the government and Inkatha's chief rival, Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC).

Chief Buthezi has repeatedly accused the government of trying to strike a private deal on political power-sharing with the ANC, the biggest and oldest opposition movement.

A source at the talks with the ANC said there was "progress rather than a deal" Tuesday on the resumption of multi-party negotiations and terms for a transition from white rule to democracy.

Russians feel democracy slipping

WASHINGTON (AP) — Russia is on "a slide toward authoritarianism" with people losing faith in democracy and a free market economy, according to a U.S. organisation's opinion survey of Russians.

The survey, released Tuesday, found "a growing disillusionment with the Russian parliament, declining interest in politics and no signs that the people feel increased political empowerment in post-Soviet Russia," said the Times Mirror Centre for the People and the Press.

The Times Mirror poll found that by a margin of 51 per cent to 31 per cent "Russians say they now favour a strong leader, rather than a democratic form of government," the organisation reported.

But it also found that President Boris Yeltsin has a 54 per cent job approval rating, and that the

people favouring a return to autocratic leadership have no one particularly in mind.

A Times Mirror survey in Russia 17 months ago reported 51 per cent favoured a democratic solution and 39 per cent wanted a strong hand.

"The slide toward authoritarianism, in a nuclear-armed nation that remains potentially the most dangerous to the United States, is manifested in a number of ways in the survey and in a series of focus groups," said the report titled "the Russians rethink democracy."

In addition to statistical findings, the report also included quotes from the focus group interviews.

"The word 'democracy' has almost become a curse word," said a member of the St. Petersburg City Council, responding to the survey.

Meanwhile a Moscow court official said Tuesday 12 officials accused of trying to overthrow the Soviet government in 1991 will stand trial in April capping more than a year of investigation, manoeuvring and recrimination.

The trial is sure to be an historic event that could shed light on questions about the failed coup, including allegations that then-President Mikhail Gorbachev had known about the plan beforehand.

Mr. Gorbachev, who has denied advance knowledge of the failed putsch, will be among about 120 people called to testify, deputy chairman of the court's military collegium, Anatoly Ukolov, told the Interfax and ITAR-TASS news agencies.

President Yeltsin, who led opposition to the coup, is not expected to testify, Mr. Ukolov said.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Pickering becomes ambassador to Russia

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton has nominated career diplomat Thomas Pickering, credited with an exemplary performance as U.S. ambassador to the United Nations during the Gulf war, as his ambassador to Russia. The decision represents a comeback of sorts for Mr. Pickering, who was pulled out of the U.N. position last year by then-secretary of State James Baker. Clinton spokesman George Stephanopoulos, speaking the announcement at his daily news briefing, said Mr. Clinton met Mr. Pickering in Little Rock, Arkansas, last month and was "deeply impressed by his knowledge and wisdom." He said Mr. Pickering, 61, currently the U.S. ambassador to India, has "distinguished himself in a number of challenging assignments. As U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Mr. Pickering led the diplomatic effort to achieve Security Council solidarity in opposition to Iraq's illegal occupation of Kuwait," Mr. Stephanopoulos said.

Clinton, Kravchuk discuss nuclear arms

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bill Clinton spoke with Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk Tuesday about eliminating nuclear weapons installed in his country when it was part of the Soviet Union. "President Clinton felt it was important to touch base with President Kravchuk," White House Press Secretary Dee Dee Myers said. "In particular, they talked about developing close U.S.-Ukrainian relationships." Mr. Clinton spoke Saturday with Russian President Boris Yeltsin. Ms. Myers said Mr. Clinton told Mr. Kravchuk he hoped Ukraine would ratify START I and other non-proliferation treaties as soon as possible. The news agency ITAR-TASS said the conversation focused on the Ukrainian parliament's debate on ratification of the START I treaty signed in 1991 by then-Presidents George Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev.

'Clinton to end military ban on gays'

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House asserted the right to revoke the ban on homosexuals in the military without the consent of Congress. Some Republican lawmakers explored how to force a vote, but the Senate's top Democrat predicted "it will all be worked out." President Bill Clinton will act swiftly to end the 50-year-old prohibition, spokesman George Stephanopoulos said Tuesday. "The president has the power to move forward on ending discrimination against homosexuals in the military," he said. "If we can avoid a legislative battle, that's all to the good," Mr. Stephanopoulos said. "But the president remains committed to his policy." Mr. Clinton held his first legislative strategy meeting with congressional leaders, Democrats and Republicans, but participants said there was only scant discussion of lifting the military ban on homosexuals. Senate majority leader George Mitchell, D-Maine, said outside the White House that he didn't know how the Senate would vote on the issue if it arose. But he added, "I don't think it's going to come to that."

Mrs. Clinton starts work on health care

NEW YORK (AP) — Hillary Rodham Clinton got a quick start Tuesday on her job heading her husband's health care task force, pursuing advice from award-winning health care volunteers. She also wowed New York school kids, one of whom declared she was pretty, wonderful "and I think she's powerful." Mrs. Clinton picked up a community service award on her first trip outside Washington as first lady, and used the occasion to question other winners of the award whose projects involve health care for children. The Lewis Hine Award was for her service to children over the years. Mrs. Clinton said she met informally with the Hine health care winners to "learn more about the programmes, why they've been singled out, get their advice about what will work." President Clinton appointed his wife, a former corporate lawyer, to lead the task force on one of the most important issues of his presidency, saying Monday that she was "a first lady of many talents." Six cabinet secretaries will work under her on the task force.

Azerbaijan's premier resigns

MOSCOW (R) — Azerbaijan's Prime Minister Ragim Guseynov,

has resigned and was succeeded by his deputy, ITAR-TASS news agency said. Azeri President Abulfaz Elchibey issued a decree replacing Mr. Guseynov with First Deputy Prime Minister Ali Masimov, the 40-year-old head of the State Economics and Planning Committee. TASS quoted the decree as saying Mr. Guseynov had offered to resign but gave no details. Officials in the former Soviet republic could not be contacted to confirm the report. It seemed likely that Mr. Guseynov, one of the team who took power after the Azeri Popular Front deposed former President Ayaz Muttalibov last May, could have been a victim of internal politics. The Popular Front consistently pressed for full independence from Russia and rest of the Commonwealth of Independent States, which Azerbaijan formally left in October. Mr. Guseynov told a local newspaper last week he would rebuild links with Russia and this may have helped assure his downfall.

Russia seeks quick START-II approval

MOSCOW (R) — Russian officials said they would press for quick ratification of the START-II treaty, aimed at slashing Russian and U.S. nuclear arsenals, and expressed confidence parliament would approve it. Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Yermolov told a parliamentary committee that the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START-II) would be presented for ratification "in the nearest future." Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev told reporters he believed the pact, signed earlier this month by Russian President Boris Yeltsin and outgoing U.S. President George Bush, would pass safely through parliament.

S. African school plan 'depends on growth'

JOHANNESBURG (R) — A plan to end one of the most divisive legacies of South African apartheid, racial inequality in education, depends on an economic growth rate hard to achieve without a political settlement, economists said Wednesday. The government plan to close the yawning gap between spending on black and white schooling assumes long-term growth of three to four per cent a year, compared to estimates of around 1.5 per cent in 1993. "It seems a bit on the optimistic side, but if there is a political solution to our problems and we get overseas capital, I won't say it is not achievable," said Johan Louw, chief economist at the investment institution Sanlam. "We need a growth rate of at least five per cent to make a dent in our unemployment. It will depend on determined action to redress our shortcomings: Low productivity, lack of competition and the system," he told Reuters. Conservative estimates put the unemployment rate in South Africa at 25 per cent of the economically active population.

Thornburgh leaves U.N. post in March

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Dick Thornburgh, the U.N. undersecretary-general for administration and management leaves his post on March 1, the United Nations has announced. Mr. Thornburgh, a former U.S. attorney general who took the U.N. job a year ago at request of then-President George Bush, decided to leave when his contract expired despite U.S. fears he would not be replaced by an American. He has been responsible for controversial reforms in cutting down the U.N. bureaucracy, criticised for being a heavy-footed administrator and compromised for exposing pockets of corruption and favouritism. However, it was improbable that Mr. Thornburgh would have been renewed by Secretary-General Boutros Ghali without running into conflicts with the Clinton administration. Spokesman Joe Sills told reporters "I can confirm that Mr. Thornburgh will be leaving on March 1." Sources at the U.N. said the United States was worried that an American would not be named to fill his post.

Austria to seek EC entry

VIENNA (R) — Austria's coalition government has agreed to seek European Community (EC) membership as a neutral state. Leaders said that neutrality conformed with the terms of the Maastricht Treaty on European Union. The government unanimously approved a negotiating position for the start of official entry talks month, Chancellor Franz Vranitzky and Foreign Minister Alois Mock told reporters after a cabinet meeting.

COLUMN

Camilla tight-lipped about royal love tape

LONDON (R) — The elusive woman at the centre of Britain's royal love-tape scandal reacted for the first time to reports that she had a torrid relationship with Prince Charles with a frosty "no comment". Camilla Parker Bowles, who is keeping such a low profile that one newspaper has offered a reward for sightings of her, was invited by a press watchdog to make a formal complaint that publication of the tape was an invasion of privacy. But the Press Complaints Commission said Mrs. Parker Bowles had written saying she would not even comment on the recording. The so-called "Camillagate" tape, apparently the product of bugged telephone calls, records a purported six-minute "love chat" between the heir to the British throne and the middle-aged mother of two in late 1989. Prince Charles, also invited to complain about the publication of the tape, turned down the opportunity Monday. For either to complain would have confirmed widely held suspicions among the British public and royal-watchers in the press that the tape is genuine. Without an official protest from either party, the commission is highly unlikely to investigate whether the press is guilty of any breach of privacy. Mrs. Parker Bowles wrote to say that she had never commented on the matter before and would not do so in future, a spokeswoman for the commission said.

Aladdin becomes highest-grossing animated film

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Aladdin has become Walt Disney Pictures' Magic Lamp, making more money than any other animated film in history. The musical took in more than \$7.4 million for the No. 1 spot at the weekend box office and has earned \$147.9 million so far in 11 weeks of release. The announcement was made by Exhibitor Relations Co. The old record was held by Disney's 1991 Beauty And The Beast, which has grossed almost \$145.9 million to date, according to studio figures. The 1988 movie "Who Framed Roger Rabbit" grossed \$154.1 million, but it combined live action with animation. In addition to winning two Golden Globe Awards over the weekend from the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, Aladdin also received a special achievement award for Robin Williams' performance as the voice of the genie.

Marquess arrested twice in one day

LONDON (R) — Britain's troubled Marquess of Blandford, heir to the £100-million (\$153 million) Blenheim estate, was arrested and cleared on contempt charges only to be rearrested in connection with an assault. Police seized the 37-year-old son of the Duke of Marlborough in a dawn raid Tuesday after he failed to comply with a court order to surrender his passport following a maintenance dispute with his estranged wife. Blandford was allowed to go free after explaining to the court that the document had been stolen and agreeing not to seek a new one while a travel ban was still in force. But police quickly arrested him again and took him in for questioning after a police photographer claimed the aristocrat assaulted him with a belt buckle.

Romanian princess accepts libel damages

LONDON (AP) — A Romanian princess accepted apologies and payment from a London newspaper that erroneously reported she had a lesbian lover and had dated the son of former Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu. London's Evening Standard newspaper admitted in the high court that the allegations about Princess Margareta, 43, in an article written last August were false. Roderick Dada, representing the publisher Associated Newspapers, said the Evening Standard had published a full and prominent apology the day after the article appeared and had agreed to pay the princess substantial damages. The amount of those damages, which the princess said she would donate to charity, were not disclosed. Princess Margareta's lawyer, Richard Hartley, told the court that all the allegations were untrue and had caused the princess, the eldest daughter of Romania's former King Michael, great distress.

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